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OF THE

MEETING OF
COUNTY SUPERINTENDENTS

HELD IN

TOPEKA, KANSAS,

August 28, 29,

1907.

STATE PRINTING OFFICE,
TOPEKA, 1907.

Kansas - Education State Board
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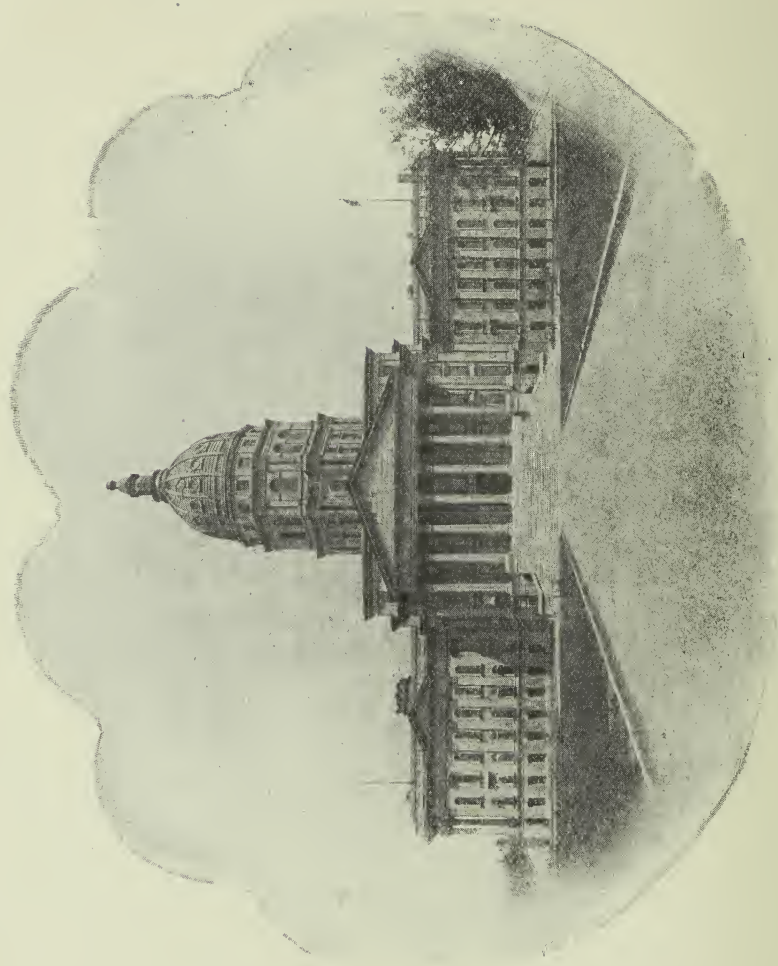
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SPENCER
PUBLISHED BY STEPHENS
AND SONS



CAPITOL BUILDING, TOPEKA.

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EDUCATION
DEPT

TO COUNTY SUPERINTENDENTS AND ALL INTER-
ESTED IN THE CAUSE OF COMMON-SCHOOL
EDUCATION.

This bulletin is an attempt to furnish to you an account of the recent meeting of county superintendents, at Topeka, on August 28 and 29. A part of the program we are able to give somewhat fully; other parts only furnish a small portion, as our notes are not complete.

To those superintendents who were unable to be with us we express the hope that you will read the matter herein contained and that you may catch something of the spirit of enthusiasm and inspiration that characterized this meeting. No mere recital of the papers and talks can serve to give a complete picture of this meeting. The commingling of superintendents, the opportunity for exchange of views and experiences, and the incentive that comes of such association, cannot be transmitted to paper. It is sufficient to say that it is the testimony of every one present that it was the very best meeting of its kind ever held in the state. The superintendents were all agreed that they had been more than repaid for the time and money spent in coming, and are enthusiastic in their belief that the county superintendents' meeting should be made an annual and a permanent feature of our educational system.

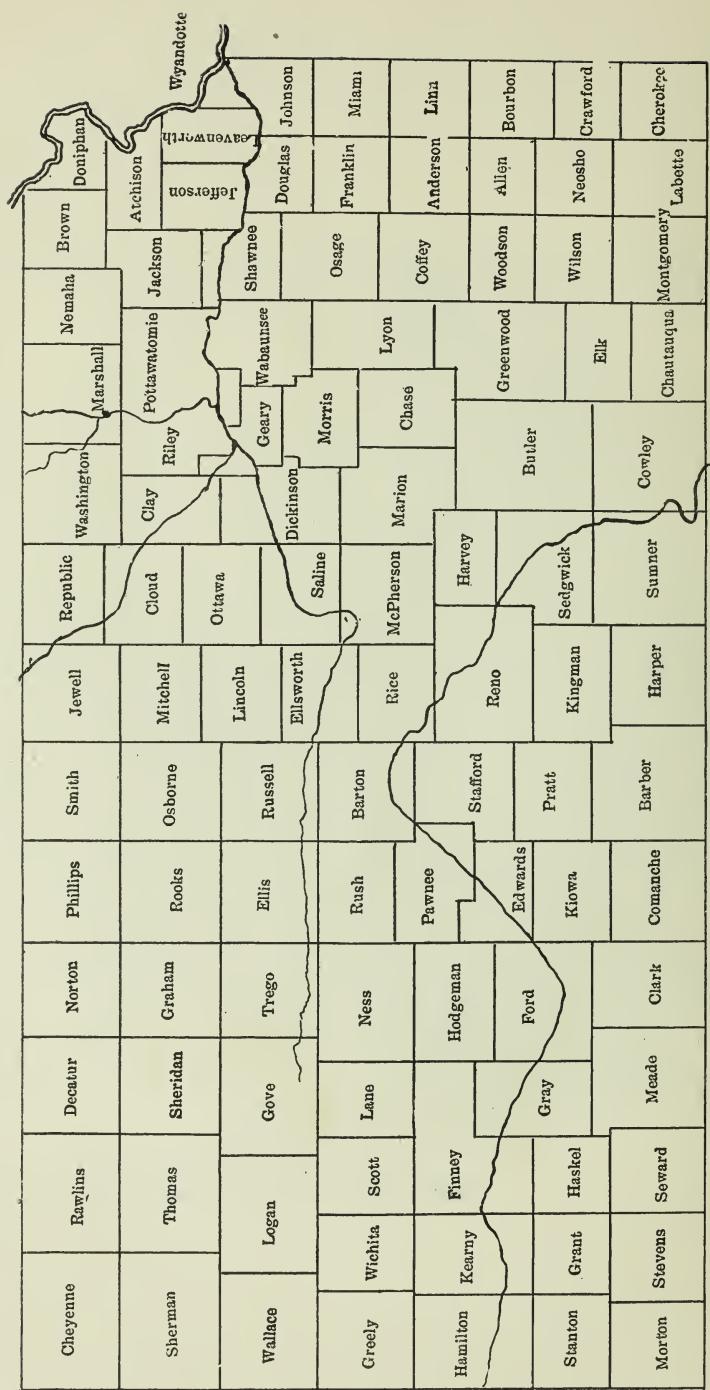
That you may gather something of value to you as you read these pages, and that the cause of our common schools may be made the better thereby, is my sincere wish.

Very truly yours,

E. T. FAIRCHILD,

State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

P21125



KANSAS.

105 counties. 9,000 school-houses. 503,730 school children. 12,234 teachers.

PROCEEDINGS,

AUGUST 28 and 29, 1907.

TOPEKA, KAN., August 28, 1907.

According to the call of State Supt. E. T. Fairchild, the county superintendents' meeting was convened on the above dates in the supreme court room at the capitol building. The roll-call by counties showed that there were present more than half of the county superintendents at the first session. Superintendent Fairchild then delivered an address, which was in part as follows:

Fellow Superintendents: I want to congratulate you and I want to congratulate the state of Kansas upon the splendid attendance we have here to-day. It speaks well for the present and future development of our schools. There is no other body of people anywhere that exercises a wider or more profound influence upon educational affairs than yourselves.

I realize that many of you are here to-day at a cost in personal sacrifice, both of time and money, greater possibly than public interest would seem to justify. I am confident, however, that you will be more than repaid in that form of coin upon which the teacher must so much depend, and which supplements the actual dollars received. You will have the satisfaction, I trust, of knowing that it has been good to be here; that you have learned of methods and gathered of inspiration to a degree that will make you a better, a more capable, and, if possible, a more conscientious superintendent.

I have looked forward to this meeting with the greatest eagerness, in the firm and full conviction that it means unlimited good to the cause of common-school education. I verily believe that this meeting is to mark an era in the history of education in Kansas. It seems to me that it is in the hearts of the people as never before to respond to such united effort as we may make. You have come here from the different parts of the state; have come from different environments, each with his own problem, and yet each with the same problem in view—how best to be of service to the boy and the girl.

Now that we are here, let us sink, if possible, every consideration of personal interest or personal ambition, and confine our efforts and our discussions to these broader problems which mean so much to the schools under our supervision.

I have presented to you a program which you, no doubt, have observed is intensive rather than extensive. It has seemed best to confine ourselves to a few pressing problems and discuss them, rather than to attempt to cover a wider field. I trust that this program will, in a large measure, meet your approval, and that every superintendent here will feel that this is absolutely his meeting; that it is a meeting of, for and by superintendents. Only the

frankest and fullest discussions will make of this meeting the meeting it ought to be. It is not my purpose to anticipate the program, yet I trust you will pardon me if I again call your attention somewhat in detail to the matters of interest it provides:

The "Common-school Course of Study" is an agent of the greatest efficiency in school work. Many county superintendents have used it conscientiously and have secured splendid results. There is a feeling, however, that in some counties it has not received the attention it deserves, that its real importance is only dimly felt; and it is hoped the papers and discussions on this subject may lead to a more general knowledge of the possibilities to be secured through the use of the Course of Study, and that it may come to be used in every county in the state.

"County Graduation," unfortunately, frequently means one thing in one county and an entirely different thing in another county. The requirements for graduation, it seems, vary more than they should. It is hoped that we will be able to agree while here upon certain standards and upon certain methods of determining the kind and character of the work done, so that everywhere graduation in one county may in effect stand for just as much as it does in another county.

As to the "Barnes Law," you are aware of the great importance of this measure in Kansas. It was adopted at the recent election by forty-three counties. In most of these counties it is being received in an enthusiastic spirit and splendid results are anticipated. In a few of the counties the commissioners and people are lacking in interest, or are its declared enemies. I trust that the discussion of this subject will remove many questions of doubt, make clear to all the desirability of such a law, and enlist each of us as its champion.

Perhaps the greatest opportunity of the county superintendent is in the visitation of schools, and yet the real importance or benefit to be derived depends, after all, so much upon the personality and heart-power of the superintendent. If he is wise and kindly and helpful, his visit will result in the greatest good to the schools. He may be an inspiration both to the pupils and to the teachers. His good judgment and large experience will enable him to smooth over many of the rough places in the work, and his experience should be invaluable in assisting the teacher to the real use of her power. Perhaps one of the greatest weaknesses in our rural schools to-day is the lack of close supervision. It may be that the experience of some of you who are present will enable us to solve that problem.

In "Elementary Agriculture" you are to discuss a subject that is not only of interest to you but that is of interest to the entire state. Many of our people outside of the teaching profession are studying this question, are believing in its importance and are confidently hoping that through you it will be put into effect in the schools and that great good will be accomplished.

In the matter of the "Teachers' and Pupils' Reading Circle Work," it would be superfluous for me to speak of the great importance of this subject. The chief question is not, should we have reading circle work, but, what shall be its character and by what means can we secure the best results to both teachers and pupils?

On the subject of "Consolidation," I want to say to you that I regard it as unquestionably the solution of the rural-school problem. Here, if anywhere, we may begin to build up such schools as you and I firmly believe

the country boy and the country girl are entitled to. In this type of school we may hope for longer terms, larger enrolment, better wages, and, best of all, better teachers.

I sincerely trust, fellow teachers, that the discussions that are soon to follow shall prove of the greatest benefit to us. Let us make of this meeting a splendid success, so that we may go home with more enthusiasm and greater inspiration to our work.

I have asked you to come together for counsel for the reason that I believe the time is ripe for a great forward movement in our common schools. The universities of our land, the colleges, the high schools, and even the village schools, are experiencing a season of prosperity and efficiency altogether unknown in their previous history. They have partaken of the general wave of prosperity, and are in close step with the forward march of progress. So important have they become that the people everywhere are made aware of their prosperity, and seemingly are anxious that their sons and their daughters shall participate in the benefits to be secured at these seats of higher learning.

The state, in its prosperity, has treated our state institutions with signal liberality. The recent legislature appropriated nearly two million dollars for the three state institutions and their branches. This was splendidly done, and the people of the state, and especially the educators everywhere, applaud the act most heartily.

Through the agency of the county-high-school act and the Barnes law, secondary education has taken on new life, and this work is being performed more efficiently than ever before. Again, wages have increased in every department of the educational field. All this would seem to indicate that Kansas has reached a most enviable position in her school system, and that she may well pause to felicitate herself upon her educational advancement. Nevertheless it is my deliberate judgment that in the department of rural schools there has been no such awakening on the part of the public, nor has there been any such increased efficiency as we have noted in the other lines of educational effort. It is not my purpose to underestimate the excellent character of the work that is being done in many of the common schools. Faithful effort is being put forth in every county. I have every reason to believe that the scholastic attainment of the average teacher of the average country school is as good to-day as it has ever been, but there are many reasons, it seems to me, to doubt whether the teaching force in this type of schools is any better as a whole than it has been at any time in the past history of our state. When we realize that in the last ten years the number of male teachers in Kansas has decreased more than thirty-eight per cent.; when we appreciate the fact that the average age of the teachers of the country schools is, in many counties, possibly under twenty; and when we grasp the significance of the statement that in many counties the number of inexperienced teachers in the common schools is frequently fifty per cent. of the whole, we may well be solicitous as to the result. Granting that these young people in text-book knowledge are as well trained, or even better trained than their predecessors of a decade ago, yet it seems to me clearly true that these people, with their limited experience of life, are by no means as helpful and efficient teachers as those of more mature age.

The average citizen is wont to think that our schools are better and stronger because of the fact that wages have increased. Experience, how-

ever, does not seem to justify this conclusion. In a large part it is the same body of teachers, or at least the same class of teachers, that is receiving this increased wage. The real trouble is that the people have been content to look with satisfaction and approval upon the advancement in the higher phases of education, and have too frequently utterly neglected to investigate conditions as they are in the foundation work. Both teachers and the public in general are looking so intently at the imposing buildings of high schools and colleges and universities that they fail to see the intervening and humble schoolhouses of the rural districts. It may be that we have come to be more interested in the things that are taking place in these higher institutions than we are as to the quality of work that is being done in the common schools. The papers but recently gave out the statement that the population of our state is now 1,651,000. Sixty-two per cent. of this population live in the country, or in villages of less than 1000 people. This, in round numbers, then, represents the rural population, and it would seem, if we are to base a matter of importance upon quantity, that much more should be done for the rural school than for any other type.

I believe, ladies and gentlemen, that the time has arrived when you and I must do our best to arouse the public to the need of more efficient service in the rural school.

There are but nine states in the Union that do not have some form of state tax for the public schools. Kansas is in this list, and of these nine, eight of the states provide for a county tax which is to all intents and purposes a state tax, so that we come to the final and unhappy fact that Kansas is the only state in the Union that fails to provide a state tax for the benefit of its public schools.

We are indeed glad that the state should give largely of its wealth to our higher institutions, but at the same time we plead for a law that shall recognize the fact that nearly seventy per cent. of our boys and girls receive their education in the rural schools, and that shall provide a reasonable sum of money that will find its way out into the common or rural schools.

This fact remains, that the great duty resting upon the educational forces to-day is to do something that will arouse the interest of the people as never before to the needs of the rural schools. I am hoping, fellow superintendents, that this shall be the key-note of this meeting; that we shall feel constantly that we are here representing the boys and the girls of the country districts. The responsibility rests upon us in some way to start in motion a movement that shall gather as it grows and make for the development and betterment of our schools. If we can do this, will it not be well worth our while?

I have thought upon this meeting, fellow superintendents, with its tremendous possibilities, and it seems to me that the county superintendents have been working as a separate body whose purposes did not run parallel; it has seemed to me that these great problems of which I have spoken may be solved if only we can get together and work as one. If we can feel that each is a part of a great whole working for a common purpose; if we can bring about solidarity of the 105 superintendents of this state and work together, there is absolutely no reasonable measure that we might advocate that we may not secure. Let us make, then, of this meeting what we ought; give it our best thought and our best attention, and go home with

added knowledge, enthusiasm and inspiration to help the boys and girls in our charge. Come here again another year and let us have a still better meeting. With such a history I believe that I have a plan absolutely feasible, and that will simply make this meeting permanent, and insure the attendance of 105 county superintendents each year. My plan is this: to ask the next legislature to see to it that there is enacted into law a provision requiring the county commissioners of each county to pay the expenses of the county superintendent to the annual meeting. Such a plan is reasonable and just, and I am sure will appeal to any legislature as being proper, and that it will be enacted into law. Think of it! In all the history to come of this state we are to have annual meetings. We are to grow in solidarity; we are to grow in the sense of our interrelation. We will understand year by year more and more clearly the great problems that come before us. We will become a greater and greater force.

Another thing that I shall proclaim whenever opportunity affords is this: If our schools are to be effective they must be lifted up and out of politics. At the last election I suspect that there were as many as fifty superintendents in this state of ours that were relegated to private life for purely political reasons. They had served two terms and way must be made for others. They were retired from the work they were just becoming proficient in to give place to those of absolutely no experience. What city in this state would think of employing a superintendent for its schools with the distinct understanding that by no means was he to be retained for a period of more than four years? Such things are simply not considered by boards of education in the cities of our state. The one demand is that they shall render efficient service. Until the people of our state can take a broader and saner view relative to our county superintendents, we cannot hope for the best results.

State aid, closer supervision, consolidation for the rural schools. Let this be our motto.

The next subject for discussion was "The Common-school Course of Study." (a) "A Necessity," Supt. Geo. Allen, jr., Holton; (b) "How to Insure its Use," Supt. Geo. T. Coddington, Westmoreland; (c) "The Program, with Emphasis on Alternation," Supt. A. W. Hamilton, Hutchinson.

Following are Superintendent Allen's remarks on the sub-topic, "The Common-school Course: A Necessity."

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth: And the earth was without form and void; . . . And God said, 'Let there be light:' and there was light." He then created the sun to rule the day and the moon to govern the night. We thus see that order and system are of divine origin. Man has done well to follow the example so set and to carry the same idea into all lines of his activity. He has certain hours for work, for recreation, and for sleep. He performs his work in a certain way. He subdivides it, assigning to one work and the performance of one duty, and to another one the performance of another duty. The result is that more has been accomplished, and that, too, in a more satisfactory manner.

The schools, following this plan, were improved from time to time, tardy though they often were. Centuries and centuries ago it was seen that some

studies were of greater value than others. And so we read of the trivium and the quadrivium. In modern times the *same* thing is true. The three R's have been doubled and then trebled. Within the past decade two studies, civics and Kansas history, have been added to the eight previously taught in the common schools of Kansas; and now we want to add to these, elementary agriculture.

In the daily program radical changes have been made. Under the old régime a class recited whenever it was ready. If it was n't prepared, some other class recited in its stead. Hence, when the lessons were easy or pleasant to study, the class recited every day; otherwise it did not. But such a system was *not* a good one, and the program of to-day, in which every class recites every day, is the result.

Uniformity of text-books was a growth. Old teachers of my county tell me that twenty-five years ago in the same school frequently were found several different series of readers, or of arithmetics, or of histories, each pupil studying the books he or his older brother brought from the old home further east. Then followed district uniformity, then county, and at last state, with the prices cut in two.

A uniform course of study has developed in much the same way. Colleges, academies and high schools, as in other matters, were the leaders. A definite amount of work in the different branches was to be accomplished, and that along a certain line of instruction. City schools then saw the wisdom of the system, and before long a city having no adopted course of study was "a back number." Rather elaborate manuals were prepared, outlining the work in detail from month to month, and offering many helpful suggestions to the teachers. For such schools no one has doubted the value of a good course of study.

The last to take up the idea of a uniform course were the rural schools, and yet they were the schools needing it most. In a city system, under the close supervision of a city superintendent or principal, who might visit each teacher every day or two, and where that teacher had but one or two grades, a course of study might be dispensed with much more readily than in the country school with its multiplicity of classes and its loose supervision.

In a rural school, where teachers are changed two or three times during the year, as is the case in several of our Northern states, some considerable difficulty might be experienced in following a course of study closely, but even there it would be advisable; while in a state where conditions exist as they do in Kansas, or in Illinois, whose schools have been so much improved by their famous course of study, there is no valid argument against its adoption and use. The only real difficulty is in acquainting teachers with the course and in giving it a fair trial. After that its value is apparent. It is a great help to the pupil, to the teacher, and to the county superintendent.

To the pupil it is of real value, for then he knows just what is expected of him during each of the nine years of the common-school course. Not only that, but for each month there is something definite for him to accomplish. Consequently he attends with greater regularity, and, when through, graduates at fourteen or fifteen instead of at seventeen or eighteen, as his older brother did. If the term is too short for the proper completion of the work outlined, he adds his importunities to those of his teacher and his county superintendent, with the result that the next annual meeting will probably vote a longer term. Being a good student, and accustomed to

hard lessons, and having a common-school diploma admitting him to the high schools of his county, he will probably enter some higher institution of learning, and so continue his studies further. Again, for the child of the renter, who every March moves from place to place, there is the additional advantage of finding other classes in the new school within a few pages of where he left off in the old school. Hence it is clear that every pupil profits by a uniform course of study.

The teacher is no less benefited than the pupil. She has a definite plan to follow; knows just what to do and how to do it; can require the work to be done, since it comes from a higher authority, and can measure her teaching success, to a degree at least, by that of other teachers. For the beginning teacher it provides an outlined series of lessons with many invaluable suggestions from a committee of the best schoolmen in the state, thereby doubling her efficiency as a teacher. And her name is legion, since nearly one-third of the teachers each year are beginners, with very little or no professional training. I may here say that a course of study prepared as ours is and representing the best thought and experience of several skillful school workers, is better than one prepared in any other way. No one man in the state could prepare a course equally good. So the advantage to the teacher is apparent.

However, it is to the county superintendent that a uniform course of study is perhaps of the greatest benefit, for by it he knows what every teacher in his county ought to be doing. From the reports he should require her to make him at the close of each month, he can tell at a glance how far the various classes have recited. When he visits her school he can judge of the character of her work; while from the term report, made at the end of the term, he can tell how each pupil is classified as well as what ground he has covered during the year. He has then somewhat the grasp the city superintendent has of the city schools. By it his supervision of the schools is greatly improved. I feel sure the time is speedily coming when all county superintendents will require their teachers to follow the course of study closely.

Now, fellow superintendents, from these few arguments and observations it will be seen that to my mind there is but one side to this question, and that is, that a common-school course of study *is* a necessity which no county can afford to neglect to adopt and to follow closely, if it would be progressive and true to the ideals of our state.

Supt. Geo. T. Coddington then discussed the question, "How to Insure its Use," in part, as follows:

I am merely going to talk to you to-day of some of the things I have tried to do in my county in regard to our Course of Study. I am thoroughly convinced of its need and that it should be used everywhere.

I taught a certain school thirteen years ago, and a year or two ago I taught the same school again, and I found there conditions existing as they were when I taught there thirteen years before. The advancement we had been making in other schools had not reached this school. The boys and girls were using various kinds of books that had been used by their fathers and mothers years ago, and starting again next year, going over and over again the ground they had gone over before, and, while I was pondering and thinking of this, the thought came to me that what we needed was a

course of study. It was then that I decided to use the state Course of Study. The first thing I did was to tell the teachers that the county schools should be classified. I see no reason why a seventh-grade boy should not know he is a seventh-grade boy just as well as if he were in town.

As superintendent I insisted upon my teachers using the Course of Study. First I convinced myself that it should be done, then insisted upon its being done. To my teachers I said: "If you do not enforce it in your schools, it is a failure of yours and not of mine; but if you use it and it is a failure, then it is a failure of mine and not of yours."

If you have not carefully studied this course it is not possible that you will be able to direct your teachers to successful effort in its use. I sent monthly questions out and asked my teachers to send back to me the manuscript of the eighth-grade arithmetic questions. I told the teachers that this was a new thing to me; that they would make mistakes and that I would too. I required that the teachers keep their examination papers at the schoolhouse after they were graded, put each pupil's together, and file them away on a table or around the wall so that parents and pupils might see what the children have done. You would rather look at your children's work, no matter how poor the work, than to look at some other children's work.

The parents were invited to come and see the results of our examinations and were much pleased.

We had two or three teachers in our county that did not like the Course of Study. They were good teachers; teachers that had taught for twelve or fifteen years, but they had gotten into a rut, and were slow to see the benefits to be derived from a uniform course of study. Teachers wrote to me, "Is it law?" "Are we compelled to have these examinations?" "Are we compelled to use this Course of Study." But I wrote back to them that "the State Board has prepared this Course of Study and put it in the schools, and that to make this Course of Study successful and efficient you must use the questions that have been prepared each month;" and I said to my teachers: "If you cannot use the questions and the Course of Study and follow our system as we want it done, then we cannot use you." And the result is our rural schools are as well classified as are the village schools. Our teachers are clamoring to-day and watching the mails, wondering if they are to receive the Course of Study in time for the opening of schools Monday morning. We use the Course of Study and would not be without it.

On the subject of "The Program, with Emphasis on Alternation," Supt. A. W. Hamilton, of Hutchinson, said, in part:

I shall talk to you very briefly, because the question does not need a long talk, but it is of great importance to the boys and girls of the school that a good program be arranged for the conduct of the recitations. The program must be arranged with one purpose in view only, that of the good of the whole school, not particularly for any one boy or girl, and not alone for the convenience of the teacher, except as that convenience may help to do good work in the school.

To begin with, I want to say that as I look at the program I cannot think of it at all except as I think of the Course of Study. The program that does not take into consideration the work the school is doing, and is going

to do from the beginning to the end of the year, is not a proper program. The teacher who has not in mind an outline of the work to be done in the school during the school year will not succeed in making a proper program, because the program should be based upon the Course of Study.

It is a pretty hard thing to say how many recitations daily should be arranged for, and then make a program that will fit each and every school. No program will necessarily fit any two schools. The village schools will have very little difficulty in arranging the program for their grades. But our program, as a rule, as discussed here to-day, must have reference to the one to be used in the country school, the one-teacher school. We who have taught in the country schools where there are thirty, forty or fifty boys and girls know that here is found the trouble in arranging a program. I myself have visited certain schools where there were from thirty to thirty-six recitation periods per day. No one teacher can or should have such a task on her hands. When we have more than an average of seven recitations for each quarter of the day there is a loss of efficiency. The reduction must come through the alternating of recitation periods.

We find in our country schools there are constantly two forces clamoring for the teacher's attention. One is the whole school as a unit, the other is the individual. I think very often we find the teachers forgetting the whole school for the benefit of the individual. Sometimes it is the reverse. The teacher must be able to judge. The teacher must be able to make a program that will meet the needs of her particular school. The work that is outlined in the Course of Study as a whole must be used, and the teacher must adjust the program to the whole school, and, if she cannot do that, then God bless the boys and girls. There is no help for them.

The program, then, really depends upon the Course of Study. We go into a schoolroom and find the program. How shall we criticize it? Shall it be because arithmetic comes in a certain quarter of the day, or reading in a certain other quarter? In my humble opinion I do not think we ought to say much to the teacher along this line. Our teachers experiment a little and then find out that pupils do better work in certain studies in certain quarters of the day. We split hairs over the matter of subjects being put in the wrong quarter of the day, whereas the real loss to the school is because of other features in making up the program.

Mr. Hamilton then spoke of the boys and girls carrying eight or ten subjects, whereas as a matter of fact they should not be allowed to carry over four, or at the most five major subjects. No teacher should sacrifice the interests of the whole school by allowing a few pupils to take many subjects to the detriment of the entire school.

Here Courses of Study were given out, and Mr. Hamilton explained the program as given in the Course, and how alternation should be used in connection with the program. He said:

I think you will agree with me that no boy or girl should be required, or allowed, to have over four major studies, eliminating penmanship, to study and recite per day. By introducing the plan of alternation in the school the teacher has been able to allow the boys and girls to take five studies and have but four recitations a day in the major subjects.

The teacher must take the general program as found in the Course of Study and arrange it to suit her school, eliminating a class here or a class there, and substituting others.

Although Superintendent Weltner, of Kinsley, was not present, he sent a paper opening the discussion on the above subject. Mr. Weltner said, in part:

In discussing this set of papers I shall endeavor to touch upon the subdivisions briefly.

The state law provides for the teaching of certain branches of study, and for such other branches as the board may determine. This leaves the matter open for grave criticism, especially when it is apparent to any one that it is not at all likely that 10,000 school boards will come anywhere near a uniform system, even if a goodly number of them attempt to prescribe a course of study, which very few of them care to do. It is a reasonable proposition that a well-defined course of study be provided for our common schools, and that provision be made by statute enabling the State Board to place the course with every county superintendent and require its use. The legislature of 1905 made such provision. The course is a necessity, in order to enable the teacher to accomplish the best work for the time she has the pupils in her charge. Without a good course our teachers will so scatter their forces as to fall far short of what should be accomplished. Then, again, with a good course, well followed up, the pupils are able to know, day by day, just what is expected of them. It is some satisfaction to know, too, that the neighboring schools are seeking to cover common ground in the course. The completion of the course should entitle the pupil to receive a creditable certificate of completion, entitling him to pursue his studies further in some good high school.

To insure the use of the course is a more difficult proposition. The normal institute is the place where a few periods on the program should be devoted to showing teachers how to arrange the work in the schoolroom so as to secure the carrying out the requirements of the course. Young teachers, especially, will have a hard time at first to put in force a system that is quite, or altogether, new to them. The insurance of its use will, I think, lie largely with the county superintendent. By means of letters of instruction and encouragement, and personal explanation to the teacher when visiting the school, he can accomplish much. Teachers have long since come to know the value of the Course of Study in the normal institute. They must come to see that the course used in the school from day to day has an equal value. Pupils and patrons need to know something of the value of it also, so as to secure the cooperation of all who are in any way concerned in its use.

But, fellow superintendents, one of the most difficult things in the way of securing the use of the course is the short term in so many districts. Where the teacher has only a five- or six-months term it does seem a difficult proposition. It seems to me that it remains for the state to go a step farther and enact legislation securing state aid for the weaker schools, thus enabling them to give at the least calculation an eight-months term, so as to enable teachers to do a year's work in a school year that has the requisite amount of time.

Referring again to the statement that the county superintendent will be the main factor in securing its use, it seems to me that there will be com-

paratively little trouble in those schools under close supervision of a principal. This would lead to the thought that consolidation is a key to the situation. Wherever three or four schools can unite and the supervisory influence of a principal is secured there will not be much trouble to secure or insure the use of the course.

The average country school has trouble with the program. It is too often the case that the program is loaded down with a multiplicity of classes that is appalling. Something must be done to show our teachers how to combine those in classes who are pursuing the same subject but somehow do not seem to keep together. Then, again, among those pupils in the intermediate and advanced grades we must handle fewer subjects each year, seeking to alternate one or two studies each year, or, in some cases, alternating certain studies on certain days of the week; as, for instance, two lessons in physiology and three in constitution each week works very well. The program must be reduced in regard to number of daily recitations. Twenty-five to thirty or more recitations each day is a mistake and must be eradicated. If possible the number should be brought below twenty. Here, again, comes in the consolidation of schools to remedy a most grave situation. Consolidation, grading the school and distributing the work to three, four or more teachers is the only way, it does seem to me, in which we will be able in a measure to overcome the difficulty. For years we have been crowding the school curriculum, expanding the work, and demanding more of the teacher, and still we have the same old one-teacher district, that has become, long ago, entirely unable to carry the load required. Consolidation is the remedy for many of our present school ills.

Superintendent Boyer, of Kingman, further said: "When we consider that such a large number of our schools have but six months, very few five, and that so many recitations are to be heard that it is necessary to alternate, and that those studies come only four times a week, you see that the pupils can only give four-fifths of the six months to each of those subjects, so I just want to emphasize in that way the difficulties; and I hope and trust and pray that we can use our influence on the representatives of our county to the end that the minimum school term be materially lengthened. If the term should be lengthened to eight months, the problem would be solved. Let us work together for that end, that the length of the term of the country school may be increased."

Superintendent Berry, of Marysville, said: "I would like to add one word to what has been said in the papers and that Mr. Boyer has mentioned, and that is this: that while we ought to have a minimum length of term, and *that* seven months, we ought to have a definite date for the schools to begin. In my county we begin most of the schools on the first Monday in September; sixty per cent. at least begin on that date at my request. We have not ten schools that have less than seven months of school each year."

Superintendent Blackburn, of Graham county, then said: "I

believe we are agreed that it is an excellent thing to have a minimum term of seven or eight months of school and begin on the same day if possible, but we have to meet conditions, and all are not as we would like to have them. Many schools are only five months in length, but in more than two-thirds of the districts the suggestion as to the day school should begin was followed out. However, so long as so many of our districts maintain such short terms, we will find that at the closing of the term the school has not completed the work as outlined in our Course of Study for the school year. The fifth grade, for example, has perhaps finished the fourth month, the sixth grade the fifth month, and so on." (Here he explained his method of having reports made out so that the incoming teacher each fall will know what work each pupil has done during the past year, and where to place that pupil at the beginning of the new school term.) "In that report the teacher states just what month of what year the class has completed, and in that way the teacher who begins next fall will know just where the class should take up the work. The classification register that I am putting in this year has a place for the same thing, but the point I want to make here is regarding examination questions that are to be furnished by the state for the first time. I believe those questions should all be in the hands of the county superintendent, and in most cases in the hands of the district, at the beginning of the school year. If the examination questions for the first two months only are handed to me at the first of the year, there will be two-thirds of the schools that cannot use those questions, and I believe that all of the questions should be furnished at one time, and that at the beginning of the school year. Then the superintendents can send to the districts the questions required by each particular school. Now, there may be objections to that, but I know that we cannot meet conditions in Graham county without having those questions for the full course."

Mr. Fairchild replied to the above as follows: "While the suggestion of Superintendent Blackburn might be a convincing one in some instances, it would seem to be impracticable, for the reason that if the same examination questions be sent out to different schools in the same county at different times, the questions themselves would be likely to be known to pupils long before the test came."

Superintendent Scott, of Osborne county, said: "In a great many cases where the valuation is so low that not over four or five months of school can be maintained, would it not be possible to

have the pupils of a short-term school attend first, say, their own district, and then complete the year's work in an adjoining district, thus enabling the pupils to complete each year's work as laid down in the Course of Study?"

Superintendent Grabbe, of Ellis county, then stated: "I have tried the following plan and have found it quite successful: I am principally working on consolidation of school districts, and usually succeed in getting two rooms near, no matter how small the districts, consequently have two teachers. One teacher commences school the first Monday in September and teaches seven months. I ask the second teacher to commence the first Monday in October, and when the children have finished the term beginning the first Monday in September, they continue in the school under the second teacher, thus giving them eight months' instruction during the year."

Superintendent Coddington, of Pottawatomie county, suggested that any plan to complete the Course of Study in a period of six months was wrong in principle.

In regard to the examination questions, he said: "I would not send them all out at once. Let the county superintendent provide questions for such schools as cannot take the questions prepared by the State Board. If you will hold to this idea, and not let your teachers promote on six months' work, patrons will insist upon a longer term, and the desired result will be accomplished."

Superintendent Scott, of Osborne county, said: "This is what I expect to do in my county this winter, and it is possible that quite a number of other superintendents will do this. I expect to hold township meetings, one or more, just as many as I can handle in each township—a meeting for teachers and school-district boards of the township, as well as others interested in educational matters, and this is one of the subjects we shall begin upon: 'The lengthening of the school term.' The short term is not always in the district of low valuation."

Superintendent Colville, of Sedgwick county, suggested that "the question of short terms is pressing for a solution. How to get the boy through in a five- or six-months term, when the work is laid out for an eight-months term, is difficult of solution. We ought not to try to do as much in a short term as the longer term calls for. The sort of alternation that I like is the taking of a subject for four months and completing it, then take another subject for four months and complete that, instead of alternating by days."

Superintendent Jennie Davy, Harper county, said: "The teach-

dare not teach faster than the child can learn, and cannot complete eight months' work in six."

Then followed Mrs. Mary H. Kirby, who said that all districts in her county have seven- or eight-months terms.

Superintendent —— said that he thought questions sent out by the Board should not be regarded lightly, and that the same precautions should be taken as in teachers' examinations, and teachers must be impressed with the fact that they are to be used as tests, and not as review questions.

At this time Superintendent Edgecomb arose and moved that the chair appoint a committee to prepare a program for the county superintendents' section during the meeting of the state association, and that the state superintendent be chairman of that committee. Mr. Mull seconded the motion, and it was agreed that the committee should consist of five members. Motion prevailed.

Mr. Stanley moved that a committee of three be appointed on resolutions. Seconded by Mr. Hamilton, and motion prevailed.

Moved by Mr. Coddington, and seconded by Mr. Edgecomb, that an examination committee be appointed. Motion prevailed.

It was moved by Mr. Mull that the meetings be opened at 2:00 P. M., 8:00 P. M., and 8:00 A. M. Thursday. The motion was amended to read 7:30 Thursday morning, and after a lively discussion the amended motion carried.

Superintendent Coddington then asked, "What is the county superintendent to do with the flag law, and what is the state superintendent going to do with the flag law?"

Mr. Fairchild replied: "While there is considerable criticism relative to this law, especially as to that part that requires a daily program, I shall prepare, as early as possible, a suitable program and send out to the teachers. I am very much in favor of certain days being set apart in which to emphasize patriotism."

AUGUST 28—2 P. M.

The first number on the program, "Our System of County Graduation, its Needs and Defects," was discussed by Superintendent Berry, of Marysville, who said he would discuss the time of holding the examinations, and the places for holding the examinations and the questions to be used, and the material also for the examinations and who shall be permitted to take the examination, who are to conduct the examinations, how they are to be conducted, the manuscript examiners, and compensation for the examiners and conductors of the examinations, the standard that is to be required,

the graduation exercises, the issuing of diplomas, and the alumni association.

The time of holding the examination, it seems to me, ought to be different from what it has been in the past. I have found some objections to the plans that have been followed heretofore. We have had two examinations each year. It seems to me that we need to have these examinations coming, the first at the close of the eight-months term of the schools beginning the first Monday in September, the second examination coming a month later.

Now, as to the date upon which these examinations shall be held: They have been held, the first one on Friday and Saturday, and the second one on Saturday, and I am opposed to the plan of holding the examinations on Saturday. The teachers have enough work, outside of these diploma examinations, to do in the week without giving up an extra day. There is no compensation for it, and I believe it would give greater force to the scheme if we would recognize that it was important enough in the program to have a day of the regular work, on Thursday and Friday.

The places for holding these examinations: That is an important point to be considered. In our county we have had these county diploma examinations at the villages, or in some of the districts where there would be six or more pupils to be accommodated.

Some one to conduct the examinations: That can be done by the teacher of the school, but no teacher should be left entirely alone to conduct these examinations; and if they see fit, call in a third person to assist in holding the examination.

The questions: I do not care to say anything concerning them. We are satisfied they ought to be in the hands of the examining committee in ample time, and regulations in regard to the examination must be followed out as given by the county superintendent.

Material for holding the examination will be furnished by the county commissioners through the county superintendent.

Who shall be permitted to take the examination: I have encouraged pupils in the seventh grade to take part of the examination. Some of these subjects are to be finished in the seventh grade, and I can see no objections to having pupils of the seventh grade take the examination, carrying the grades that are eighty or above. Some have objected to that and do not encourage pupils of the seventh grade to take the examination.

For the examination: I believe that we ought to charge a fee for these examinations, and I will tell you in a moment why. I understand that in some places they object to that, but it seems to me if a fee is charged it will keep out of the examination some adventurers that have a hope they might possibly get through, and if they can take the examination without any expense connected with it a great many would simply try to see what they could do. Things have gotten so out in our county that the reading of the manuscripts has grown to be a very big job, and the charging of a fee would keep out some adventurers and lessen the work of the committee on manuscripts.

The question of manuscript examiners is a very important point to be considered. In our county we are so fortunately situated that we have a number of men at the head of the village schools of recognized ability, of

long term of service, professional men; in fact we have nine schools in the county that do the work of preparing for the University, and it has been the plan the past year to appoint the heads of these schools as the examiners in this examination, thus taking the examinations out of the hands of the teachers who have charge of the pupils. These men have no direct connection with any of these pupils—do not know them, unless perhaps some boy or girl is known to them in a friendly way. Each man is given one subject to grade; that lessens the amount of work each has, and it has been so that we could get the returns in a short time. Where we have a second examination coming a few weeks later than the first it is necessary to get returns early.

In our county 312 took the first examination, 218 the second. Some taking the second examination were applicants in the first also. In grading the manuscripts of the diploma people we ought to be as careful as we are in grading teachers' manuscripts. The manuscripts are sent to the county superintendent's office, and he sorts them and sends to the various examiners the subject that has been arranged for that person to grade. The latter grades the manuscripts, makes a list of the grades, and returns the list and manuscripts to the county superintendent's office, who compiles the whole list, etc., and the grades determine who has passed and who has not. It has been the custom in Marshall county to pay the examiners out of the fees collected. We have charged a fee of twenty-five cents. We understand that in some counties they pay a fee of fifty cents. If it is necessary that the examinations be held on Saturday, I believe we ought to charge a sufficient fee to cover the expenses and pay the conductors of the examination. Of course, if the examination is held on Thursday and Friday as a part of the regular week's work, the teachers are already paid for their work and time, and it is not necessary to give them additional compensation.

The standard to be attained; the standard that the pupils shall make: It has been the plan to require an average of eighty per cent. No pupil should fall below sixty per cent. in any one branch. We have followed that plan, but it seems to me that requiring an average of eighty per cent. is just a little bit high, as the average required for third-grade teachers' certificates is but seventy-five per cent.

The graduating exercises: There have been various plans used in our county, but the one that seems to me to suit the occasion best is to have general graduating exercises—a time when the graduates all come together. The past year we tried the experiment of holding these graduating exercises in the afternoon of a day during the institute. The teachers of these pupils were in the institute and were naturally interested in having their graduates appear, and in many cases went to the trouble of writing them and securing places for them to stay, assuring them they would be taken care of.

The audience was a representative country audience, coming from all parts of the county, and there were friends of these graduates from all parts of the county. Altogether 530 took the examination; result, 140 graduates. So I say that we had a representative body of the patrons of the schools at the commencement exercises; and to make it more interesting, and to add something to it, we had some members of the graduating class to appear on the program; we had the one who received the highest grades as valedictorian, and a salutatorian, and two other addresses from the class, and State Superintendent Fairchild addressed them. Following

the afternoon commencement exercises, we organized a county alumni association, and we had a banquet, a program, toasts participated in by various members of the present class. In the greater part of the county they talk of nothing now excepting to finish the course.

Mr. Stanley then asked Mr. Berry to state about what per cent. of those graduating would take up higher work.

Superintendent Berry replied: "While I cannot give you the exact per cent., the per cent. is very high because the village schools have been requiring a common-school diploma in order to enter the high school."

Superintendent Wells, Russell county, said: "The examinations are held about the same in Russell county, with the exception that we had 171 applicants who took the diploma examinations, and 32 out of that number passed. Five of them started into school at Hays as soon as they got their diplomas. A number will attend the Russell high school this fall."

Chancellor Strong said: "I do not know that it is in order for me to say anything. I am not a county superintendent, of course, but I was a superintendent once, twelve or fifteen years ago, and I had an experience along the line of graduations, although it was not graduation from country schools, but graduation from the eighth grade of the city schools. The same question came up there, of course, whether it would be a good thing to follow the lead of the colleges in graduating exercises, or whether it does not tend to lead the student to think that he has had all that is worth while. I think it depends very largely, indeed, upon the superintendent himself. If he has the stuff in him he will see to it that no student who graduates will think that this is or ought to be the end of school life. Students of that age have never found themselves, and it is not until they get into the high school or through college that boys and girls really find themselves, and understand their relation to the great scheme of life. I believe that these graduating exercises, banquets, etc., are a good thing. Anything in the world that tends to keep the boys and girls in school to the end of the course of study is valuable, and the chances are 100 to 1 in favor of their going on if they fully complete some course; therefore, I believe these devices to be most excellent. I think it would be an excellent thing indeed if we had diploma examinations, graduation exercises, banquets and alumni associations of the common-school graduates all over the state."

Superintendent Edgcomb, McPherson county, said: "I was just wanting an expression of opinion here in regard to seventh-grade pupils taking this examination. I think it is a very bad

thing for the pupils to take the examination before the eighth grade. It seems to me the better plan is to hold the diploma examination in several different places, eight or nine in each county."

Superintendent Allen, Jackson county, said: "I am very much interested in this subject of diploma examinations. I notice from the records that in Jackson county twenty classes have graduated, the first class in 1883. This year there were 114 graduates, the first year, 7 graduates. We think it is one of the best things we have in connection with the common-school system. I have thought this, however, that no teacher whose pupils are taking the examination at a given point should conduct the examination. The charge of favoritism might be made. I believe the questions should be prepared by the same committee that prepares the questions for the monthly examinations from the state Course of Study. The same persons ought to prepare the questions and the teachers ought to know that the work is going to be based on the Course of Study. We require that the pupils have the teacher's permission to take the examination. Having completed the eighth-grade work, they are admitted to the examination, if thought best by the teacher, and this plan of holding grades of eighty per cent. or over for one year has held many pupils until they had finished the course and passed the examination, completing the ninth-grade work. It seems to me best to hold the graduating exercises in various localities over the county, rather than in any one place. Large crowds gather for the exercises. Another thing, we have required every graduate to appear on the program in some way. During the past school year, out of 250 applicants 114 passed the examination and graduated."

Supt. Mrs. Belle Houston, Cloud county, said: "If the examination is not held until near the close of school, it is quite awhile before the pupils know who has passed and who has not. Again, some teachers have finished their schools and have gone home. Who is going to take charge of these exercises in such cases? Some years the examinations came so late that many of the schools of the country were out before we knew, and the teachers had left. So, for the last two years, we have had our graduating exercises at the county-seat. If the examinations are held Thursday and Friday, where will they be held; where can room be secured when schools are in session? That seems to be a pretty big question. Suppose the boards did not want to dismiss in some of the schools? The boards would be slow to see the necessity of dismissing school in the various districts in order to hold the examination."

Miss Collister said: "Lower-grade work should be so thoroughly

done that when pupils come to the eighth and ninth grades they will pass the county diploma examinations with a much larger per cent. than at present."

Superintendent Fairchild stated that: "No city school would dream of having fifty per cent. of its pupils fail in examination work, and we may well look upon this as a strong argument for better things in the country schools; but I would rather see ninety-five per cent. fail than to feel that by any chance the children were allowed to think that they did not have to have scholarship in order to secure a diploma."

Superintendent Poland, Nemaha county, asked Professor Johnson, high-school visitor, Lawrence, as to whether he thought a boy of eleven or twelve years of age would be able to take up high-school work. Mr. Johnson answered that, as a rule, he would not, although there might be exceptions; that no boy or girl of eleven or twelve years of age should be admitted to high-school work unless for exceptional reasons.

On the subject of "The Barnes Law," Asst. State Supt. C. C. Starr said, in part:

I do not believe that a law has been enacted for years that is capable of greater latitude in interpreting portions of it than this law. The Barnes law means free high-school education to the boys and the girls living outside of school districts maintaining high schools. It means equal high-school privileges to the farmer's boy and girl and the boy and girl living in town. It means equal high-school privileges for rich and poor alike.

Twenty-two counties in the state had already established county high schools before the passage of the Barnes law. Forty-three counties have adopted the Barnes law, with the result that now sixty-five counties offer free high-school education, and in those counties the public schools are free, as they should be, from the primary grades up to the University.

Educators and other friends of the law should realize that it is a matter of prime importance to the educational interests of the state for the Barnes law to be made popular so that it may become firmly fixed as a part of the school system of the state, and so that it will be an easy matter to attempt to amend the law, when desirable, without endangering the law itself.

Through the kindness of the superintendents of the counties in which the Barnes law has been adopted, I have been able to learn many things concerning the status of the law in those counties. Out of twenty-eight counties reporting, the levy was made by the county commissioners in all but three counties. The levies made in those counties range from one-fourth of a mill to three mills, the maximum. The prevailing levies are from one and one-half to two mills. In but one county did the levy reach three mills, and that was Rice county. One-fourth of a mill was levied in but two counties, and I suspect that in those counties the provisions of the law were misinterpreted. It will be recalled that the law was amended so that the maximum levy is to be three mills, but that the levy is to be sufficient to maintain those high schools; but in amending the law the legislature, through

an oversight, doubtless, failed to formally amend the section in which a levy of one-fourth of a mill to three mills is provided. That section is, in fact, amended, however, although it still remains in its original form in the statutes. The amendment, being a later enactment, is the law to be followed where it conflicts with the original section.

Although the number of inquiries in the reports mentioned and the number of things requested to be explained concerning the law are rather large, I shall consider also some phases about which inquiries were not made.

Some doubt existed for awhile as to what vote was necessary in order to adopt the law in any county. It is the opinion of the attorney-general, and of the weight of legal advice upon the subject, that a majority vote on that law was all that was necessary to adopt it in any county.

Where the law was not submitted to the voters at the last election, as provided by the law, the question arises, Should the law be submitted at the next election? It is the opinion of the attorney-general that the law in those counties should be submitted at the next general election. It is, moreover, just as mandatory that the law be submitted in those counties at the next election as it was mandatory for it to be submitted at the last election.

It is not advisable for cities to contend too zealously for a very large tax levy at the time the law goes into effect, but it is very important that the Barnes high schools endeavor to become popular with the patrons of those schools, and to make the benefits of those schools felt more and more. When that is accomplished, the matter of securing a sufficient levy will largely take care of itself. It is not necessary for city boards of education to cut off entirely their levy for the Barnes high schools. They have the same right now that they ever had to make the levy from their own funds for those high schools. The additional levies might well be used for providing equipment for manual training, for providing laboratory equipment, and for other needful purposes.

Unfortunately, the expressions used in reference to the same things in the law do not harmonize readily. The first portion of the law uses the term "admitting to the freshman class," and in the latter part of the law the expression is used "shall *fully* prepare to enter the freshman class." One portion of the law provides that the county treasurer apportion the funds according to the average daily attendance of *resident pupils*, and another portion requires the county superintendent to report to the county treasurer the average daily attendance in the several high schools of the county. The law does not seem to have recognized the existence of joint districts.

With regard to preparation for the University, the position taken by the University of Kansas is that the schools that are on the accredited list, but that are not fully preparing for the freshman department, comply with the provisions of the law, but that next year the requirement that the high schools shall "fully prepare" to enter the freshman class will be the standard. The Kansas University undoubtedly has the right to fix the standard as to preparation for the University, and Barnes high schools must be such that they meet that standard.

The high schools that have less than nine months of school per year will not be accredited by Kansas University after this year, I am advised.

Another question is as to the time of accrediting the high schools. The law does not provide that a year shall elapse after the high school shall have

been accredited in order that it may be eligible to receive county aid, but it provides that those schools must have been maintained for one year up to that standard in order to be eligible to receive county aid, and the accrediting may be at the end of the year.

When the county superintendent makes his recommendation as to the amount required for the maintenance of the Barnes high schools it is evident that he must exercise his judgment as to what schools are complying with the law, but his duty in that respect is largely perfunctory; yet, undoubtedly the judgment of the county superintendent upon that question will largely be the one that will prevail, and unless his judgment is challenged it will prevail.

It is possible that some high schools may prepare four-year courses of study and claim that thereby they have complied with the Barnes high-school law, and demand their share of the county funds. Kansas University will take care of that matter; for a high school must have been maintained that meets the standard required by Kansas University for admission, and the high school with but a paper course would not come up to that standard. In addition to the college preparatory course a general course should be provided, and the standard as to what a general course should be is probably the average general high-school course, which is well understood. As the "general course is intended for those who do not intend to continue school work beyond the high school," the subjects of the general course should be selected to meet those conditions.

In our smaller towns and cities the boys and girls are in the midst of an agricultural community, and it is possible and probable that the boys who live in town will ultimately have something to do with the farm and farm life. Moreover, the Barnes high schools are supported in part by farmers, and for that reason those high schools should be designed for the farmer's boy and girl as well as for the town boy and girl. While business courses long since have been provided as leading toward the industry of the city, for the same reason agriculture should be provided as preparing for the industry to be followed by pupils coming from the farm. It is generally conceded that manual training is specially adapted to the general course, and, in fact, to all courses, and as soon as possible the Barnes high schools should become equipped to offer work in manual training. To start with, woodwork should be offered for the boys and sewing for the girls.

The question has been raised as to whether pedagogy, to prepare the boys and girls for teaching, should not be added. But a small percentage of those who attend high school are aiming to teach, and to add such course would overburden the small high schools. The larger high schools, that employ a large number of teachers and have facilities to offer many elective courses, might well offer a course in pedagogy.

It might be better for the smaller high schools, that cannot meet the requirements of the Barnes high-school law, to do but two years of high-school work and then transport their pupils to the Barnes high schools, which will be free to them, and which will offer them much better advantages than they could find in their home high schools. It may be urged that the very small high schools should have a portion of the county-high-school fund. The object of the Barnes law has not been so much to maintain a very large number of high schools, but it has been rather to maintain a limited num-

ber located conveniently in the counties, and of a very high standard, so that they may compare favorably with the county high schools.

The levy made for the high schools under the Barnes law should not be applied for building purposes, but should be applied to the payment of the salary of teachers and janitor, for fuel, water, apparatus, library, and general supplies.

Discussion was then opened by Superintendent Boyer, Kingman county, as follows:

It is with a degree of reluctance that I enter upon the discussion of this subject, which has been so ably handled by Mr. Starr. I call attention to the fact that to my mind the most important defect in the Barnes high-school law is the minimum levy of one-fourth mill. In some counties where the law has been passed it was rendered useless by the indifference of the county commissioners, who would defeat the purpose of the law by levying the minimum.

I sincerely think we ought to be congratulated upon the passage of the amendment to the Barnes law passed by the last legislature. At the passage of the Barnes high-school law in our county there was but one high school of any importance doing any great amount of high-school work; that is the high school of the city of Kingman, which is doing very satisfactory high-school work, indeed. Its condition, however, is going to be materially improved, from the fact that instead of three teachers to do the work of the Kingman high school, as in the past, we now have five teachers. They have raised the wages of all the high-school teachers. We have \$500 for laboratory, \$500 for a library, and \$6000 for teachers' wages and other expenses. We made a levy of two mills and the high school of Kingman gets the full benefit of this levy.

The people of Norwich could easily come under the law, and I thought it would be a fine idea if we could get another high school in Kingman county. They will come under the Barnes law next year. They have built two rooms to their building, fitted things up in fine shape, and employ two instructors in high-school work, giving all their time. They have been having two years of high-school work; next year they will have three years work.

A very small per cent. of the graduates were attending schools of higher learning before the passage of this law. Since the passage of the law, in order to educate along this line, I have sought to impress upon the teachers the importance of talking to those who were about to take the common-school examination, urging them to go to the high school, and the higher schools of learning later. One question I asked on the application blank was, "Do you intend to go to the county high school next year if you pass this examination?" Second, "What other plans have you for further education?"

The past year the enrolment in the Kingman high school was 100. I estimate that this year the enrolment in the Kingman high school will be 160. Last January \$25,000 in bonds were voted by the county of Kingman to build a high-school building costing \$30,000 when finished.

In the Kingman high school there is a college preparatory course of four years, a general course of four years, a business course not definitely decided upon, and a teachers' course. This latter is especially designed for teachers coming in at the close of their terms of school for advanced work.

This course has been taken advantage of this year by a large number of teachers.

The general effect in our county has been exceptionally good, and there has not been a week within the last three months but what I have been approached by farmers coming into my office and asking about the county high school, and a good many of them are making arrangements to move to town, either temporarily or permanently, to educate their children.

The levy is two mills on a valuation of two and one-third million dollars.

Mr. Fairchild said: "Among the many excellent things said by Mr. Starr two are of special importance. One is the question of fairness in establishing high schools under the Barnes law, and the other is relative to the danger that certain schools will attempt to do the work when they are really too weak. I would be very careful about encouraging the county to attempt a high school simply because of the opportunity to get hold of county money. It is much better for the weak district to endeavor to have one or two years of high-school work, and to do that well, than to overburden themselves with attempting the impossible."

Prof. W. H. Johnson, of Lawrence, in discussing this subject, said, in part:

Ladies and Gentlemen: In justice to the speaker on the next topic, and also because of the fact that the subject upon which I am to speak has been so thoroughly discussed by the assistant state superintendent, I promise you that I shall occupy your time for only a brief period.

I have been asked to discuss the Barnes law in its relationship to the University. The first clause of the law provides for a standard which schools shall maintain before they shall participate in any funds arising under its provisions. The standard indicated in this first clause would seem to mean that any school, before participation in any funds, shall have maintained a course of study which shall enable students who have completed the same to enter the freshman class of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences of the State University. We take this to mean that any school meeting these requirements should maintain a course of study which provides for at least twelve of the prescribed units for entrance to this college as indicated in the annual catalogue. This is the minimum requirement for entrance to the freshman class, and since the law does not indicate that the graduate of such a school shall be admitted to the University without condition, we have felt that, for the good of the high schools, and in order that smaller schools may not be put to the expense of carrying a fourth year's work, it would be not only just but wise to place the standard of requirement for all schools that participate in this law at the minimum requirement for entrance to the University.

Now, if this standard is placed at twelve units of prescribed work it will be necessary for each school to employ two teachers who shall devote their whole time to high-school work. If the classes are all represented on the program this standard will require at least twelve recitations per day which will make sufficient work for two teachers. According to the accepted high-school standards in all the Middle states, no high-school teacher should be

required to carry more than six recitations per day, each recitation should be at least forty minutes in length, and no student should be permitted to carry more than four subjects, except perhaps in a few special cases; if, however, classes are not all represented, conditions might exist in some schools in which the full time of two teachers would not be required; in such cases the superintendent might provide additional subjects or apportion a part of the eighth-grade work to one of the high school teachers.

Much inquiry has been made at the office of the high-school visitor in regard to the time when a school shall be able to participate in the Barnes law fund. It seems to me that a careful reading of the first section will make this very clear. A school shall have maintained a course of study which will admit its graduates to the freshman class. It would be impossible for a school which had carried less than three years' work to participate in this fund, because their graduates would be unable to enter the freshman class of the State University.

What has been said above applies only to high schools which are endeavoring to meet a standard which shall enable them to participate in the Barnes law fund. The law also provides for a standard which shall be maintained by any school which is organized under its provisions. Each school thus organized is required to maintain two courses of study, one of which shall fully prepare its graduates to enter the freshman class of the State University. The other shall be a general course, which is intended for students who are not preparing to enter any school after completing their work in the secondary schools. Any high school that *fully* prepares its students to enter the freshman class of the State University must offer at least fifteen units of prescribed work, a unit meaning a year's work of thirty-five weeks, five recitations per week, each recitation forty minutes in length. Such a school would also be expected to equip its laboratories for individual work of all students who take either physical or biological science; it would also be expected to provide a good working library, consisting of reference books, English classics, reference books in history, maps, charts, etc.

This standard did not originate with the University of Kansas; it has been worked out by experienced high-school principals and college and university professors who have given special thought and attention to the whole field of secondary school work in its relation to college and university curricula. The North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools has done more than any other organization in unifying and standardizing high-school work. Through its efforts all the universities in the North Central states have introduced uniform entrance requirements, and have practically agreed upon what shall constitute a university, and, also, what would naturally follow from this, this organization has indicated the scope of work which should be strictly characterized as belonging to secondary schools. This association has not only determined upon the number of units which a preparatory high school should carry, but it has defined the limits and scope of each unit of work.

The State University of Kansas, being a member of this association, has approved of the standards set by it for the high schools of Kansas, and has made its requirements for entrance conform with those of this association as nearly as the conditions in our state will permit. It is not possible yet, however, to reach the standard held up by the North Central Association. We have always in this state expected more of our high schools and their

teachers than the communities in which these high schools exist have been able to provide. The same is true to-day, and it is the hope of all interested in higher education that the Barnes law will put funds at the command of the high-school officials which will enable them to bring our high schools to the standard maintained in other states. The University, while it recommends the higher standard for our schools, yet it admits students from schools which are not yet able to meet all of its requirements. If we hope to build up in our state a system of high schools which will fulfill the requirements made by other states, such as Michigan, Illinois, Minnesota and Wisconsin, we shall be obliged to make the term uniformly nine months in length, provide a sufficient number of teachers, equip the schools with everything necessary to facilitate the work of instruction, and, finally, pay salaries which will command the services of teachers who are thoroughly equipped for the profession of high-school teaching and administration.

This law brings to the county superintendent a new and very important responsibility. The apportionment of the funds which accrue under the provisions of this law is entrusted to the county superintendent. He is also to determine whether a school is maintaining its course of study and standard of work up to the requirements outlined by the State University. This, of course, means visitation and some authority in the arrangement of studies, as well as general oversight over the school. In all of this work the county superintendent may have the coöperation of the State University, and, whenever necessary, and as often as practicable, the high-school visitor will visit schools organized under this law, at which time he will make it a point to consult with the county superintendent upon any subjects of vital interest to the schools.

Two things are of vital importance to the standard of work maintained in these high schools. In the first place there may be a tendency to admit students to high schools who are not prepared to carry on high-school work, since enrolment has much to do with the apportionment of the funds. It is very important that the grade of work be of the best quality, and that students be not admitted to the high school until they have passed a standard examination and are entitled to promotion through the regular methods provided by law. The second point is the preparation of the instructors who are employed to prepare these pupils for college work. As a rule the standard in our schools is high, and from all indications authorities are demanding a higher standard of scholarship of our high-school teachers than ever before; but it is not so everywhere. Let us be sure that our high-school students are placed under the direction of persons who are competent in every way to lead them through this very important period of their education.

Supt. A. S. Hiatt, of Linn county, gave as the reason that the law failed in his county that the people of the country had nothing to say as to the expenditure of the money.

Supt. Miss Josie Park, of Wilson county, said the law had stimulated Altoona to come up to the standard.

"School Visitation" is the next subject. Under the heading, "Its Real Purpose," Supt. C. O. Bowman, Douglas county, said:

To me the visitation period is the bright spot in my official career. Some-

times I get discouraged when I start out on a balmy morning, get thirty-five miles away from home, and am caught in a blizzard; when I meet and see such varying methods and conditions in schools, etc.; and yet, when I come in at the end of the trip and sit down to sum up what I have seen and what I have heard, I find that the good things overshadow the weak ones; that good work is predominant, and that fair conditions exist; and yet I find many things that are enough to make the heart sick. I speak only of my own county, and I think I have as good a county as there is in the state of Kansas. We have outside influences there—incentives that a great many counties do not have. We have the great University of Kansas standing up there on the hill looking down over the county, and the great denominational Methodist school at Baldwin set in one corner of the county. We have all the necessary surroundings to make our conditions pleasant, and yet we have a great many things that are not what they ought to be.

School visitation is the one opportunity the county superintendent has of leaving an impression upon the schools of his county; and if he fails to do this, if he allows this opportunity to pass by without leaving an imprint upon the schools, he is not worthy of the position the people have placed him in, and should retire as soon as possible, because this is the only time, in fact, that he comes in close contact with the pupils and teachers and gets right into the schoolroom work and observes what the teacher is doing.

First when I visit a school I take an inventory of the outside, and sometimes I have a pretty good idea of what there is on the inside by looking at outside conditions. I notice whether the weeds are cut, whether the fences are in order, whether the approaches to the building are in proper condition and well kept. I also inspect all outbuildings, and in this latter matter frequently find a most lamentable condition of affairs. I might, it is true, visit the school and fail to see all these things, or, if found, keep them to myself, but I have felt that my duty was otherwise. I have written letters to members of school boards on these topics that have occasioned me trouble in the end, having engendered the enmity of a number of people in calling attention in language that could not be misunderstood, and I presume that when the matter of election comes up somebody else will get their vote, but such is my duty as I see it.

I have taken photographs of a great many school buildings and school children. I have taken residences in the district and I even go out and take photographs of some farmer's barns and even his hog-pens, and I have taken photographs of the coal-house and outbuildings, and have gone so far as to show the patrons that the scenes in and around the schoolhouse show exactly the conditions under which their children live during the hours they are at school. Sometimes I find the pig has the better of the boy.

Having satisfied myself as to conditions on the outside and fixed in my mind what I shall recommend to the board, I step inside, and naturally the first thing that strikes my attention is the condition of the schoolroom. I imagine, fellow superintendents, that you can step into a schoolroom and in fifteen minutes come to a pretty fair conclusion as to the kind of school that is being taught in that room. To comply with the law one must visit the school one hour, and for that reason a school that needs my attention but fifteen minutes gets one hour. As soon as I determine the condition of the school, I then determine what I shall do to aid the teacher. I observe the ventilation on entering the room. Often the air is so thick that you could

almost cut it with a knife. Should not the superintendent discuss these matters with the teacher?

As to the matter of program, the very first thing I ask from my teachers after school has commenced is to send me a copy of the daily program. Sometimes I write two or three times to get it, but I get it. I tell them, "I want a copy of your program just exactly as you use it." I also ask them for a classification of their pupils. I want the year and the work they are in. I go back to my last year's work and compare. I discover that John Smith, of district 46, who was in the sixth year, had only attended fifty-two days out of the whole term, and Mr. B. did not promote him; but Mr. C., the new teacher, has promoted him and put the boy in the seventh grade. However, I am now prepared, and help Mr. C. to place the boy where he belongs. This is one way I have of discovering the weak school at the beginning of the year.

Where the program is too long, I endeavor to assist the teacher in cutting it down. Last year I found one teacher that had thirty-two recitations per day. When I got through with that program there were twenty-two recitations; we cut out ten.

The next thing that I observe is the teacher's method in class work and endeavor to suggest plans that will help her in this particular. The superintendent's visit ought to be a great stimulus to the pupils. There are opportunities for each of us to instill ideals into the minds of our pupils.

Supt. Miss Rose Allen, of Bourbon, in discussing the subdivision "How Often Should We Visit and How Long?" said we should visit as often as we can. We can do more good by visiting than in any other way. The successful general is with his men in action as well as in spirit. Where 100 or more teachers are employed the superintendent should have an assistant. In the large counties thorough visiting without an assistant is impossible. Each school should be visited at least twice each year, and at least half a day should be given to each school.

Supt. C. I. Vinsonhaler, Doniphan county, discussed the subject "How to Find the Weak Schools so that They May be Visited Early in the Year." Mr. Vinsonhaler said, in part:

This topic assigned me, "How to Find the Weak Schools," it seems to me, should read "Seek ye the weak schools early and ye shall find them, for, like the poor, we have them always with us." I have learned from my friend Jno. MacDonald the art of dividing. I shall, therefore, divide my topic into three "hairs."

1. We shall find weak teachers by coming in contact with them and by talking with them. We know by personal interview with a teacher whether that teacher is likely to be a strong or a weak teacher.

2. I suppose we are to consider merely those who are teaching for the first time. If they attend the institute we can know them in the institute and by the work done there, and we may know them by their examination papers. That is a pretty good test; especially when they do not stick close enough to get any help or instruction from the people around them.

3. We may find out through the people of the district. We may learn

from some good, conscientious men of the district whether or not the teacher is giving satisfaction. Still, if this man has pupils in the school, I do not know whether we could rely upon him or not. It would be better to ask of some one who has no children in the school.

I wish to say just a word with reference to the weak teachers. We have them, we have them, oh, we do have them, and we would like to get rid of them. I do not blame the teacher; I blame the system that we have. I blame the system that we have that permits boys and girls of eighteen years of age to go into the schoolroom as soon as they can pass an examination and get a third-grade certificate. It is the fault of the law, and what can be done? I am heartily in sympathy with Professor Johnson's talk this afternoon to have the teachers make preparation. The question of weak teachers ought to be eliminated from our schools. I tell you it ought not to be, but so long as our law provides for it so long it will be that way. I try to discourage these young teachers from going into the profession until they have completed at least the high-school course. We will have these weak teachers with us, and the only thing we can do is to find them out and visit them often.

The general discussion was opened by Supt. Miss Jennie Davy, Harper county, who said:

This subject of school visitation is one of vital moment just now. I believe the order is "When, Where and How to Visit," but in the discussion it seems best to begin with, how to visit. Certainly we are to go to the teacher as a friend and helper, and in order to be the best friend and helper, we ourselves must be instructed in principles and trained in methods that we may be able to judge and advise aright. During a number of the past years it has been my privilege to be the teacher of methods in the Harper county institute; and now, as I take up the work of visiting the schools of the county, I feel that I am testing my instructions.

I believe Emerson says: "No matter how poor I am—no matter though the prosperous of my own time will not enter my humble dwelling, if the sacred writers will enter and take up their abode under my roof, if Milton will sing to me of Paradise, and Shakespeare unfold to me the worlds of imagination and workings of the human heart, and Franklin enrich me with his practical wisdom, I shall not pine for want of intellectual companionship and I may become a cultivated man though excluded from what is called the best society in the place where I live."

Only as we believe teaching to be the greatest work in the world can we make our teachers believe it. We are to visit, at least according to the law, every school once during the school year; but some of these schools will need us more often, and when we visit the weak school or the weak teacher we should leave with the impression that we shall see this school very soon again. And where personal visits seem impossible we have recourse to the ever-helpful and friendly letter, for we must touch the very heart of that weak teacher and let her see how anxious we are for her success, and lead her to believe that earnest, continued effort on her part means success. We must lead her to try to be able to say, "I am doing better to-day than I did yesterday; there is more thought and skill in my work; there is more humanity in my heart, and more Christ in my spirit."

When I visit: As soon as possible. Well begun is half done, and we

know that a few suggestions if given at the right time and in the right way may prevent a world of trouble, and if disorder has taken hold of a school it will take much to restore order to that school. We want to visit the youngest, the weakest, the most inexperienced first, if possible, and these visits dare not be hurried ones if we are to note the true character and personality of the teacher. The progress we make in this school year will largely depend upon the help we are able to give during the early part of the term. It seems to me that every visit might be followed with profit by a personal letter. We may help every teacher to become informed, accomplished and educated, and thus courtesy may become contagious and find its way into every home in the district and be a joy to old and young alike. I know how much thought, how much planning and how much more work it will take to carry such a theory out, but when we have done it we shall have accomplished something worth while. The great workers in our world, the men who have moved our educational world, have only been able to do this because they gave their whole heart, their undivided attention to the matter in hand.

Superintendent Fairchild said: "The mechanical accessories of a school are not the vital things. The great thing is to develop the character of the boys and girls; to leave in the atmosphere of the room the feeling that you have heart-power and sympathy for pupils and teachers."

Superintendent Stanley, Lincoln county, then said: "I just want to say a word or two about my plan of visiting. I visit a school this week, and next week I see the same school again, and if I am not satisfied with the work I ask them to put in practice certain suggestions I make, and ask them to write me. If things are not working right after this has been done, I go back and offer further suggestions."

Supt. D. H. Holt, Cherokee county, said:

I am one of the young superintendents, or rather one of the new superintendents in our state, and it would seem that I should remain quiet and listen to the others. Of course, we new superintendents are a good deal like the new teacher—when he starts out he has his theories. I have had considerable experience in teaching, and I remember superintendents that have visited my schools. I have gotten very little from the county superintendents. Now, after I found I was county superintendent, I think one of the things that impressed me most, and that probably has caused me more trouble than anything else, is this thing of how to be able to help some weak teacher, and during our institute my principal aim was to get some point before the weak teacher to make him a stronger and more progressive teacher.

I believe in uniformity. I believe in a uniform course of study, and, as far as possible, I believe in a uniform course of study in our country schools, and during the last month I have been working on this principle: that if an army is well fortified, the battle is more surely won. We had a conference with our teachers, discussing school matters, and during the past month we

have arranged a program that I think will suit conditions in our country schools. It will give them a start at any rate; they will have to make some changes, but it will help me in my visits.

Supt. A. S. Hiatt, Linn county: "Should the superintendent talk formally to the school?"

Superintendent Fairchild replied: "It depends on the speaker; talk is not always necessary. 'My dear children, I am glad to look in your bright faces,' is all worn out."

Superintendent Fairchild announced that he proposed to have a third day's session of the county superintendents and institute conductors and instructors after the adjournment of the State Teachers' Association next December. At this after-meeting institute problems would be discussed under the management of the State Board of Education.

Superintendent Fairchild then appointed the following committees:

On program for State Teachers' Association in December, Superintendents Randall, Wells, Wetzig, and Allen; Mr. Fairchild, *ex officio* chairman.

On resolutions and permanent organization, Superintendents Vinsonhaler, Hinshaw, and Davy.

On examination questions, Superintendents Carter, McDaniel, and Kirby. Superintendents Coddington and Kelsey were then chosen by the superintendents to act in conjunction with the above committee on the question of county graduation. The latter committee to report at the meeting during the holidays.

EVENING SESSION, AUGUST 28, 1907.

The first subject on the program for the evening, "Elementary Agriculture," was discussed at length by Supt. A. J. Stanley, of Lincoln. Mr. Stanley said, in part:

Lincoln county was ripe for this subject before I became county superintendent. We have some people there who attended the State Agricultural College, and came back home full of ideas, and they have talked it, as people who have good ideas usually do; and then my predecessor, Mr. Lyon, member of the State Text-book Commission, was enthusiastic along this line also.

Not quite a year ago, when the institute was held, Doctor Burkett, of the State Agricultural College, was one of the speakers. When I heard Doctor Burkett speak I received such an inspiration in that line that I made up my mind I would find a way to introduce the study of agriculture into the public schools of the county. Within two or three days of the time I heard him speak I found in the school laws that section which states what subjects must be taught in the public schools, "and such other subjects as the school board may elect." That was just what I wanted, and I immediately started out to educate district boards. I want agriculture taught in

the Lincoln county public schools this year. Such things as seed selection and testing, soil preservation, moisture conservation—cultivating the soil so as to retain the moisture. Such knowledge will lead the boys and girls to stay upon the farm where they belong, besides being of great value to them in other ways.

We can give the idea, the individual must work it out for himself, so I thought it best to go at it in that manner, talking about it at public meetings, speaking upon agriculture in season and out of season, getting school boards together; and afterward I got five or six boards to purchase Doctor Burkett's little book on agriculture and teach it in their districts. The matter grew until before long I had thirty-five teachers who were teaching this little book in their schools.

I took the subject of corn, because corn is the most important crop in the state, worth the most, most widely distributed, and is so easily taught. These are some of the things I try to have them teach: The time to select seed-corn. I teach farmers that they should select corn for seed at this time of the year—in the fall. If they desire early corn, it would be the easiest thing in the world to select seed at this time of the year. If you desire early corn, go into the field, make your selection, and tie a rag string about it. Select some uniform height that you want, and select ears along about the same height all the way, select from a good, strong stalk, and at husking-time secure the ear of corn for seed.

This spring I talked to them about seed testing and seed germination. Where the farmer leaves the selection of his seed-corn until spring, he knows nothing of the origin of the corn he selects, or anything about it. I would get them interested in the idea of selecting the seed-corn in the fall of the year. The boys are talking to their fathers about it, and there is where we are going to get results.

I urged upon the teacher to take a box and prepare for the seed test, and take sand. They could not understand why they should not take black mold. Check the box of sand off in squares, something like the sections of a township, and have as many squares as ears you are going to test. Select kernels, two from tip end, two from the butt, and two from the center, and plant them; the two from the end at the top of the square, the two from the center in the center of the square, and the two from the butt at the bottom of the square. Treat No. 2 in the same way, and so on. (Then followed a description of the germinating of the corn and the lessons to be taught the children.)

The farmer who farms a field of corn with a stand of but 33½ per cent. loses one-third of his time and the profit the land should yield. Last year, in Iowa, P. G. Holden, the great expert of Iowa, by testing the seed right from the planter, found that the average in Iowa was only about 66½ per cent. stand. Get this idea before the boys and girls, tell what the actual germinating power of that corn is, explain fully and carefully how a corn-tester is to be made, and the boys will go home at night and make a corn-tester, and the first thing you know the father will have a great big tester, and be testing two bushels of corn at a time.

By studying the cultivation of corn, we may get the intelligent interest of the children and cause them to see and know and think, and make them take an interest in things about them. A little intelligent observation means a great deal. Intelligent interest may produce a great deal. (Here Mr.

Stanley gave the bread-pan and lamp-chimney test. It shows how the soil conserves moisture.)

The fertility of the soil needs to be preserved here in this great state of Kansas, with its rich productiveness. The soil is being exhausted. Taking from it year after year and giving nothing back is drawing too largely upon its natural resources, and in the end means exhaustion of the soil. I would have the teacher impress these things strongly upon the minds of the children—that the same crop cannot be raised year after year on the same soil without exhausting the soil. (Then Mr. Stanley spoke of crop rotation, and also of raising certain crops for the purpose of plowing them under in order to restore to the soil the phosphates, etc., that have been exhausted.)

Some farmers burn the corn-stalks after the corn has been gathered, some burn the stubble of the wheat-fields, thus robbing the soil of the returns that should be made to it in the form of a fertilizer. Plow the stalks and the wheat stubble under and let them enrich the earth for the next season's crops; something must be given back to the soil in return for the bountiful crops harvested from year to year.

Urge upon the boy and girl the idea that they should stay upon the farm. Too many are drifting to the towns. I like the idea of the son staying upon the farm. I would rather see the farms cut up into small tracts and owned by the many, than in large tracts and owned by a few.

I wish to urge upon the teachers that this subject of agriculture be not considered a difficult thing to teach. The subject unfolds itself in such an easy, inspiring way as to be the means of a great enjoyment. It will be a great and lasting pleasure to the teacher and to the school. I tried to teach it to my teachers in the normal institute, and all of them are going to try to teach it this coming winter.

The discussion was opened by Superintendent Carter, of Shawnee county, who spoke as follows:

I did not know I was to discuss this paper or I should have prepared and brought some information to you that I cannot give you, not knowing beforehand that I was to discuss the paper. I can better tell you what I intend to do than what I have done. This is a subject that has come to stay. I do not see why we should go away from things that are around us that are so interesting and study of myths and of heroes that might or might not have been a long time ago.

I began last winter with lectures by Doctor Burkett. There was a little curiosity on my part to know how it would be received. It was received most favorably, indeed. I was surprised to hear the hearty indorsement that the teachers gave. I was firmly convinced in my mind of what we ought to do, but had said very little about it until we had these lectures. During the institute we had three different lectures by Professor Miller, of the State Agricultural College. I think that paved the way for the work this winter very nicely. I propose to be guided very largely by the work sent out by the State Agricultural College. The College was established for the purpose of promoting this kind of instruction, consequently I propose to be guided very largely by their instructions and by these six bulletins that are to be sent out. Bulletin No. 139, that Mr. Stanley spoke of, I secured and used very largely in the corn-growing contest, with great success. We have our contest each fall, and we are trying to associate the

corn-growing contest with the work of the public schools just as much as we can, and in this way the boys become interested in farm work.

There is another bulletin, published by the United States Board of Agriculture, called "Our Bird Friends." Every teacher ought to have this bulletin. Study bird life in connection with agriculture; also the subject of insect pests in conjunction with agriculture.

Let the boys and girls bring questions that are puzzling the farmers, and if the teacher cannot answer them, then submit them to the State Agricultural College.

In connection with the poisonous plants we might discuss wild parsnip, the loco-weed and other poisonous weeds, that is, that are poisonous to animals.

The rotation of crops should be made plain to the boys and girls—the rotation of wheat and corn. Teach the boys, and by and by they will bring the thought home to the fathers. "Why are you planting corn all the while? Why not plant something else and return to the soil something of the fertility?"

Mr. Carter thought it well to give to the boys and girls more of bird study and the study of insect life on the farm, and less of the ideas brought out by Mr. Stanley on seed selection, germination, conservation of moisture, etc.

Prof. J. H. Miller, of the Agricultural College, then discussed the subject, as follows:

I am glad to have this opportunity to talk to the county superintendents, because it indicates business, and I want, at the beginning of the very few minutes I shall use this evening, to commend the action of State Superintendent Fairchild in gathering the county superintendents together for a business session. This meeting will mean more than any movement that has been started in years in this state. The address that we have heard this evening by Superintendent Stanley in outlining the work that he has undertaken is a very great inspiration to me and ought to be to all of us. It is a definite work that we have to accomplish. It has come to stay. Twenty-five counties in the state are greatly interested in this subject. The country boys and girls, and even the young men and women who have been reared in towns, are greatly interested in the subject of agriculture.

Now, what has so far been done is all voluntary. There is a general spirit of interest in the movement, and very much more will be accomplished than if we had a legal enactment making the study of agriculture compulsory, and our country teachers will feel that it belongs to them.

The counties in the southeastern part of the state ought to practice more particularly intensive farming, fruit-growing, clover-raising, etc. In the western part of the state farming should be devoted largely to alfalfa and wheat-raising.

Not long ago I sat at a table with seven other bankers (laughter)—seven bankers, I should say. They were talking agriculture when I sat down. I happened to know one or two and they introduced me to others, and during the whole progress of the dinner the bankers showed the keenest interest in agriculture. Each man owned farms, and they were interested in farming. Every other interest depends upon the agricultural interests. "If it

were not for the farmers we could not continue in the banking business," they said. "We are making our money from the surplus funds that come to us from the farmer. Everything depends upon agriculture."

I would have a reading circle for the family of the farmer, taking up the subject of agriculture and study about it. The farmer is being educated when he studies seed germination, pollination, etc. We will have to educate the boys and girls in the fundamental principles of agriculture. It must be taught in the country school by those who are teaching in the country school. I know I have gone to twenty-five institutes and listened to civil government, and found that the teachers did not know very much about the subject of civil government, and the same is true of grammar, and I have come to the conclusion that the average teacher in the country is better prepared to teach agriculture to-day, without having any special training, than she is to teach civil government and grammar. Now, I believe that the county superintendents and teachers need to bring this home to their pupils thoroughly, that the farm industries afford better opportunities to-day for the training that goes to make up a happy, successful life than ever before. We know the movement is spreading, we know the interest over the state is growing.

At the College the matter of publishing bulletins to assist in the work of teaching Elementary Agriculture in our common schools was brought up several times for consideration, and the idea was talked over that if we send these bulletins directly to the teachers and furnish the material there will be no excuse for their not doing the work. The six pamphlets are as follows: (1) Soil, with Relation to Fertility and Moisture; (2) How Plants Feed and How Plants Grow; (3) Hygienic Cookery; (4) Tree Culture; (5) Birds and Insects; (6) Live Stock on the Farm; and will be sent directly to the teacher, beginning with the 1st of October. Now, if these pamphlets are furnished to your teachers, and if they know the pamphlets are being sent out not only with your knowledge but with your consent, and know that you are looking to them to do the work, they can do it, including it in their general exercises two or three mornings in the week.

The legal steps in the matter are to be taken two years hence, when the teachers will be ready to take up the matter in earnest. I believe there is no one thing for the next two or four years of your office of more importance than the starting of this movement, which means so much for the state of Kansas in the future.

Superintendent Ida Collister, Ottawa county, then said: "We just started this last winter. I have talked it over some in our county, and at the last farmers' institute they asked me to be present at the meeting. They proposed that we put it in our institute course this year. I told them we had no funds out of which I could pay an instructor. Then the farmers said they would pay for it themselves if we would put it in. I added it to the normal course, and we had Mr. Shepherd, of Manhattan, to teach it in the normal two weeks."

Superintendent Rice, Jefferson county, then discussed "Teachers' and Pupils' Reading Circle Work," and said, in part:

This reading circle work is certainly fraught with great meaning to the

schools of our state if it is properly developed. When I say the schools, I mean to go farther than that and include the pupils. Our work must be for the boys and girls of Kansas, and each of us in the 105 counties of the state represent from 3000 to 10,000 of these boys and girls. . . . "Tell me what you eat, and I will tell you what you are," would be more of a truth if you were to say, "Tell me what you read, and I will tell you what you are." If you find a boy who has a taste for nothing but the vapid, sentimental trash that is poured upon the public, it is no trouble to judge of the sort of character he is building, and the same might be true in regard to the teachers' reading as to the pupils'. It is hard for me to talk teachers' reading circle, because all the time I am thinking of the pupils' reading-circle work. It is much more important to me to see that the pupils are guided into right habits of reading. It seems to me that people who have reached years of discretion and assumed life's responsibilities ought to be capable of selecting their reading-matter, but it is of vast importance that the youth be guided aright.

As to the teachers' reading-circle work, I believe that if we had a graded course of some kind, with a two or three years' adoption of some good text on a given subject, and made that the basis of our professional work, it would be very desirable. Our present set of books is a good one. As a member of the reading-circle board I believe I can promise you that we are going to do the very best we can to put the reading-circle work upon a basis that will mean something to the teachers and to the pupils of the state, and if we could each of us, as county superintendents, realize the vast importance of uniformity of action in this reading-circle work, and go home enthused with the idea of doing all that we could in this direction, I am sure that we would get results from it.

We have discussed the reading-circle work at each of our county associations, held once a month, and some of the teachers do very good work, but it is always the teacher that really needs such work who will not do the work. We have already planned for the coming year to divide our county into seven districts, have one general meeting of our county association, and later have each district meeting on the same day, and with the assistance of the high-school principals, down there in Jefferson county, who are very loyal to every move in educational matters, and who have promised to conduct these seven meetings for me in the various districts, I am expecting great things to be accomplished. I expect to make out a set of questions for review on each of the reading-circle books, taking so much for each meeting, and giving the teachers a little test, have it written and returned to my office and kept on record there. Then I will just refer the school boards as to whether or not a teacher has done the reading-circle work satisfactorily, to the files there, and board and teacher can settle the matter the best they can. If the teacher's record is clear there, why, all right; if not, it is between the teacher and the school board. I do not expect to issue a certificate unless the reading-circle work is done.

Pupils' reading-circle work.—I believe that the matter of libraries in each country school is getting down closer to the heart and home life of the pupils and patrons than anything else we can do for the school. I emphasize this matter in making selections for the pupils' reading-circle work. The books in the reading-circle list for the pupils have been revised and revised, and any objectionable book is stricken from the list any time a county

superintendent makes objection to it. The list is already made out for the pupils, and we have taken every precaution possible and believe they will nicely supplement the Course of Study in geography, history of the United States, and nature studies. All of Crane's publications in regard to Kansas are included, as they are called for in the Course of Study, and would be a help in supplementing the Course of Study.

The discussion on this subject was then opened by Supt. Mrs. Mary H. Kirby, Osage county, who spoke as follows:

Carlyle says, "May blessings be upon the head of Cadmus, the Phœnicians or whoever it was that invented books." And when we think of the ennobling and enriching influence of the world's best books, we are ready to exclaim, with Channing, "God be thanked for books; they are the voices of the distant and the dead and make us spiritual heirs of past ages." Books are the true levelers; they give to all who will faithfully use them the society, the spiritual presence of the best and greatest of our race. Said an eminent young man in a public address, "I was born in a cabin—my parents were poor people, but my mother left me a priceless legacy; she taught me to know and love good books.

There is also another side to the book question. Disraeli has informed us that ninety-nine out of every one hundred books are worse than worthless. The world is full of pernicious literature. We are to teach the child mind to discriminate between the good and the bad, the false and the true—teach him to love the one and hate the other; therefore it is imperative that the child, before he has arrived at the age of discretion, should have some one of mature judgment select his books and decide the nature of his reading-matter. One good book has often molded a life and decided the destiny of an immortal soul. The greater English classics—the Bible, Shakespeare, Milton, and Bunyan—have set the standard and molded modern English literature. The translation of the Bible into the vulgar tongue hastened the Reformation and foretold the Renaissance.

Environment is acknowledged by all sociologists to have far greater weight in determining the future career of an individual than heredity. Chief among the potent factors of environment is the reading-matter by which we are daily surrounded. A child may have refined, Christian parents and a home in which good taste is evidenced on every hand, but if all his spare moments are occupied in reading detective stories, lives of pirates and bandits, or even the milder and more sentimental love stories in which the magazines and papers of the day abound, we cannot expect much of the boy.

The pupils' reading circle board has a great mission to perform in the selecting of reading-matter for the pupils of our great state. They should be persons of most excellent judgment and good taste—competent to select books of unquestioned merit; books that are interesting and instructive; those that appeal to the child mind, and bring forth those traits of character which make a strong man or woman.

The teachers' reading-circle books should also receive the serious and careful attention of the board. Only the best is good enough for us. As I look back over my own experience with these books, I find that I shall always cherish some of them as near and dear friends. They have materially enriched my life. Among them I remember Lecky's History of the American Revolution, Curtis's The United States and Foreign Powers, Hins-

dale's Art of Study, and Bates's Talks on Literature. Bates's definition of a classic is well worth the price of the book, and his quotations are so beautiful and well selected that they make the mind to ponder and the heart to glow. "There are certain writings that amid all the multitudinous distractions of practical life, amid all the changes of custom, belief and taste, have continuously pleased and moved mankind, and to these we give the name classics."

I have found much practical common sense in *The Social Spirit of America*, and hope that it will be the means of diffusing a broad philanthropic spirit among the educators of our state. Among the many political problems we should work for are mentioned, a more charitable spirit between employers and the employed; the English Co-operative system of mercantile houses; selection of the best officers in municipal and educational positions, regardless of party affiliations; the German system of money loans; the initiative and the referendum. Among social evils to be remedied are mentioned child labor, sweat-shops, slum life, and other kindred evils. While not trying to throw any particular bouquets at the present reading-circle board, I also wish to mention our pedagogics, *Common Sense Didactics*, by Henry Sabin, full of most excellent suggestions to teachers. I am especially pleased with the emphasis which he places upon the idea that the teacher should save all his latent energy to be expended during the hours he comes in direct contact with his pupils, condemning the habit of going to the school-room at eight o'clock to prepare the work for the day and staying till five o'clock in the evening to make the idle pupils get their lessons, when they should have been compelled to get them at the proper time. Also, the carrying home of long, tedious manuscripts to grade, depriving themselves of proper sleep and exercise. Every teacher should have proper rest, recreation and diet.

Reading circles should be organized in as many centers as possible; the work should be outlined, and questions sent out from the office at proper intervals. Anything worth doing at all is worth doing well, and we'll never be able to eclipse the Socratic method of the skilful use of questions.

A good book in pedagogy, it seems to me, might be retained two years, thus giving us during the time three works of a literary or historical nature.

The rapid succession of pedagogical works is sometimes confusing. They require more intense study than other books, and are more readily forgotten.

I hope that we shall have excellent results from the present course, and expect to do my part toward making the work a success in Osage county.

FORENOON SESSION, AUGUST 29.

This meeting opened at 7:45 A. M., with a general discussion of "Consolidation," by Supt. L. W. Nutter, Republic county, who said:

There are many great and important questions concerning our public-school system of to-day. I might mention many of them, but let it suffice to say that the greatest of all these is the consolidation of our rural schools.

I do not believe that the educational system in our public schools is keeping up with the commercial world in progress. It is true that in many cases, as when the building becomes totally unfit for use, bonds are voted and another school building somewhat better than the old one is erected.

I do believe that the boys and girls in our country schools have the same rights and are entitled to as good schooling and as much refinement as the boys and girls in the city—seven months for the country schools and nine for the city schools.

What I may say to-day is not intended to revolutionize our school system. In fact I am in doubt whether or not it will do any good at all. I am not here to convert you. I am sure that you already agree with me, in the main points, at least.

There is only one way that this meeting can bring forth any good. That is for each of you to go home and instill into the people of your county the necessity of consolidation. It is my wish that each county superintendent in the state may hold at least two meetings during the year for the purpose of discussing this subject. Use it as one of the leading topics for use at your teachers' associations. There is not one of you that is not able to get out into the districts and show beyond doubt that three or more districts may unite and be carried on at very nearly the same cost on the average attendance as before. Another way to get this matter before the people is through the newspapers. Get the editor interested in the matter. He will help you, and will be glad to do so. For next to the minister and the school-teacher, in doing good, is the editor.

The reason cities have better schools is because they pay for them. I wish to show you what the city of Belleville is doing for her school children, and see if you think that the farmer is sacrificing very much or being imposed upon when he has to pay from ten to twenty mills to help maintain a school. Last year Belleville voted twenty mills for running expenses. They voted four mills with which to pay on the \$500 bonds they owe. And in addition to all this, a few months ago they voted \$10,000 with which to erect a new school building.

I will offer you consolidation as a remedy for many of the evils, many of the drawbacks, and many of the shortcomings of our school system.

I will read you from the annual report of 1902 of the Department of Education, and then from the one of 1904:

"While this movement of consolidation has spread to all parts of the country, it is only in a few localities in any state that the system has been adopted, and in fewer still that it has been a settled policy. Generally, it is in the experimental stage. The practical working of systems of centralized schools, wherever they have been established, is being watched with more than ordinary interest by school officials in nearly all sections of the Union as furnishing a possible solution of the problems of improved rural schools. There is a natural reluctance on their part to enter upon any far-reaching changes whose wisdom has not been practically demonstrated by examples and object lessons in their immediate neighborhood, and under similar conditions," etc.

"As a further evidence that centralization is here to stay, attention should be called to the fact that, while Gustavus was the first township in this county to adopt this system, since we have adopted it every township adjoining us has adopted it, and at the present time has in operation similar schools. Those who are nearest to us seem to be most favorably impressed with its benefits."

In the report of 1904 the growth has been so great that the result of the saving has been given. From this report you will see that from one-fourth to one-third is saved:

"In New Hampshire the cost is less in 118 towns, the same in 5, and more in 1. In Massachusetts the cost (after consolidation) was less in 68

per cent. of the towns, more in 16 per cent., and the same in 15 per cent. The amount saved was \$132 in regular teachers' wages, though salaries increased from five to nine dollars a week, and the term from twenty-four to thirty-six weeks."

Indiana is given mostly by counties and shows a gain of from one to four dollars per day, in many cases the cost being reduced to one-half. If these cases are true, and they certainly are or the United States government report would not give them, why should we be afraid or hesitate to do our best to bring about consolidation?

You are all well enough acquainted with the system to know that it would be no experiment. The system is now in use in most of the states, many such schools being in the state of Kansas. I am pleased to know that you are to hear directly from those who are ready to speak to you from actual experience and to tell you just exactly how they work. As a result of consolidation in Indiana 700 of the small schools have been abandoned since the consolidation of schools began. These schools have given way to 280 larger consolidated districts. Out of 91 counties reporting, 43 indorse it; 9 are against it; and 39 have not sufficiently experimented to give in a decision. An average of 8312 children were transported daily, at an average cost of about eleven cents each.

I believe that the law governing consolidation is very good as it is. But I believe that it could be made a great deal better. It should be changed from a local-option to a general law providing for consolidation under certain conditions; that whenever certain specified conditions exist in a district it should be the duty of the proper authorities to establish a consolidated school. I am aware that you will not all agree with me on this point. You will say that this is taking the matter out of the hands of the people. Some states have what they call local option, while we have a general law. Why not have a general law in this case? If it is fair in one case it is fair in the other.

It is merely a business proposition. What causes capital to unite? Why is it that our smaller firms are not able to compete successfully with our larger ones? We say that in unity there is strength. I believe that this is true in the school system as it is in anything else.

If in 1902 we were waiting for results, why wait any longer? The results are now spread out before us. If it is wise for business firms to consolidate, why is it not a paying proposition for schools to unite?

Some will tell you that the reason the students from the country rank so well in our schools and colleges is due to their country schooling. You all know better than that. I say it is in spite of their country schooling. Keep them on the farm and give them the advantage of the graded system and we will show you that they are still at the beginning of the progress they are capable of making. We wish to bring to the boys and girls of the country such schools as they have in the city, and still keep them on the farm.

From twelve to fifteen years of age is when most of the country graduates finish their common-school course. Theoretically it seems best for them to go to school the next year and review the same subjects. But every one of you knows that after a student graduates from a school he throws away his time if he takes the same studies at the same school a second time. They do not have the same interest in it that they manifested when they had an object in view. You may ask why the parents do not

send them away to school or college. I will tell you. They wish to keep them with them as long as possible. Therefore, the student will, for three or four years, either go to school and take up the same work of the previous year or will go only a few months each term and receive very little benefit.

We claim that through consolidation we are going to take the school to the pupils instead of having them come to the school. What parent wishes to start his twelve- or fifteen-year-old boy or girl away to begin a four- or five-years course in some college? They are not old enough at this time. Let the environments be the best that any school or college can furnish, and who will dare to say that it compares for one single moment with the gentle and loving influence of home life?

I wish to mention a few advantages that are to come from the consolidation of schools.

One teacher says that it is not so much a means of saving money as it is for getting more for your money.

It increases the average attendance.

It furnishes us a better school in which to teach the subject of agriculture.

It gives and maintains better schools.

It gives the country student as good a school as the city student has, and yet leaves to him the advantages of country life.

It allows the boys and girls to remain at home with their parents from two to four years longer and still receive the required education.

It places a high-school education within the reach of all.

It makes their average education a ten-years education instead of an eight-years one.

It establishes a larger social center.

It makes a community in which church, Sunday-school and literary entertainments may be held.

Supt. W. S. Higgs. Rice county, then discussed the sub-topic, "A Statement of the Enrolment Before and After Consolidation in Rice County, and a Comparison of Cost per Capita," as follows:

There are three consolidated schools in Rice county, designated as Union 2, Union 3, and Union 4.

Unions 3 and 4 were the first to organize, June 19, 1903. Union 3 (Chase) already had a school building of three rooms, which accommodated all the pupils of that district, consolidation adding only about fifteen pupils to that school. Chase is a town of about 225 people. Union 3 contemplates building a new school building in the near future.

Union 4 is an entirely rural district. This district at first moved two of their old schoolhouses together and fixed them up and used them temporarily, until last fall, when the people built a fine, up-to-date building, costing for everything about \$5000.

Union 2 was organized May 24, 1905. Only three districts were disorganized, and all large schools. A fine, new school building was built, also barns and sheds for horses and wagons, costing when completed \$4500.

The three consolidated schools were composed of ten districts, which were disorganized in 1903 and 1905 respectively. The year before consolidation the census enrolment for the ten districts was 301; enrolment in school, 258;

average daily attendance, 187; cost of maintaining the schools, \$4149; cost per capita, \$22.20; average levy, 13.6 mills.

AFTER CONSOLIDATION.

The annual reports of the three consolidated schools for the year ending June 30, 1907, are as follows: Census enrolment, 297; enrolled in school, 272; average attendance, 217; cost of maintaining schools, \$5283, cost per capita, \$24.34; levy, 20 mills.

Before consolidation nine teachers were employed (district 18 had but five pupils and sent to Chase for several years) and received an average salary of \$41. Seven teachers now do the work and receive an average salary of \$54.65.

The cost of transportation last year was, approximately, \$1.50 per month per pupil. The pupils are conveyed in enclosed wagons, which are furnished with sheet-iron stoves, and it is no trouble to keep the children comfortable. In a few instances the board have arranged with isolated families to furnish their own conveyance.

A COMPARISON OF THE WORK DONE.

Last year there were 143 graduates from the common schools in Rice county. Of this number the graded schools of the county, of which there were eight, furnished 68, leaving 75 for the district schools and the three consolidated schools. Of the district schools, 45 of the number turned out 42 graduates, and the three consolidated schools 33.

Of the union schools 58 were on examination, and 33 passed with a general average of 85.7 per cent. Of the district schools 90 were on examination, and 42 passed with a general average of 83.9 per cent.

The per cent. of attendance, etc., of the ten districts consolidated for the year preceding consolidation and the year following:

Before consolidation: Per cent. of census enrolled, 85; per cent. of enrolment attending, 72; per cent. of census attending, 62.

After consolidation: Per cent. of census enrolled, 91; per cent. of enrolment attending, 80; per cent. of census attending, 73.

Area of districts: Union 2, twenty-three square miles; Union 3, twenty square miles; Union 4, twenty-eight square miles.

The routes vary in length from five to nine miles, but few of the pupils ride over five miles.

Pupils have their regular seats in the wagons and are directly in charge of the driver who is responsible to the principal and board for their conduct, and so far as I can learn but very little trouble arises about the conduct.

There is practically no tardiness made by pupils who are transported.

SUCCESS OF CONSOLIDATION.

Consolidation of rural schools is a success, because of the better results secured. The attendance is greatly increased, and I think upon investigation the same is true in other places.

It does away with tardiness, and so far as I know not one of the wagons has ever been late. The increased number of pupils in the classes increases the interest and better work is done. Because of fewer classes longer time is secured for recitations and the result is more thorough work. Children go to school with comfort in bad weather. Habits of regularity and punctuality are inculcated—no small part of a proper education. The opportunity

of the bully to impose upon smaller children on the way to and from school is taken away. As a rule the best teachers are in the graded schools, besides it makes close and better supervision possible.

The troublesome question to be met in consolidation is that of transportation. Yet, I believe that the problem can be satisfactorily solved. I have talked with some who opposed consolidation, and after having given it a trial they are loud in their praise of the results obtained, and not one is willing to go back to the old way. I am planning to have a meeting of school-district officers sometime this fall, when one of the subjects to be discussed will be "consolidation." I shall endeavor to have some one who lives in a consolidated district, and who is able to handle the subject thoroughly, to talk on the transportation phase of the subject.

In fact, I am looking forward to that meeting with a hope that the superintendent and district officers will be more in sympathy on all questions which are of vital interest to our public schools.

Supt. P. D. Scott, Osborne county, gave "A Review of Consolidation in Osborne County and a Statement of the Transportation Problem as They Find It." He said, in part:

Consolidation in Osborne county as it is to-day does not mean nearly so much as it does in some other counties. In Osborne it means the consolidation or formation of but one district. We have had better success in forming consolidated districts with adjoining counties than in our own. In the formation of the consolidated district of which I shall speak Smith county is a factor. We are now forming another one in which Russell county will be a factor. I believe consolidation is the solution of a great many questions that we have been considering since we met here yesterday. I am glad that Mr. Fairchild gave this an important place upon the program, because I think it is, of all things we have discussed, the most important.

In June, 1905, district No. 19 of Smith county, embracing six sections, districts Nos. 19 and 27, Osborne county, embracing altogether nine sections, voted to form a consolidated district, so that the district now comprises fifteen sections. The district now has a valuation of \$100,000. The people were very enthusiastic over the consolidation. It seemed to stir up enthusiasm in school matters wonderfully.

After consolidation the people concluded they needed a new schoolhouse, and at an expense of \$6000 erected a nice four-room building. Consolidation has certainly brought about a great interest in school matters in this portion of the county. At first there was some opposition from those who lived some distance from the building. Now that they see the advantages there is no longer further criticism. The enrolment last year was 157. You know what that means in the way of interest, both in the grades and in the high-school work. They are also establishing a high-school course of three years—one teacher and one assistant.

Another district in our county, though not consolidated, but containing eighteen sections, transports its children. The longest distance traveled was three and three-fourths miles. The carrier makes a certain point designated at a certain hour, and all pupils to be transported meet at that point, and they are returned to the same point in the evening. There are, of course, some objections to this plan. The cost per month in this case was

\$22.50. A distinct advantage that grew out of this transportation was the greater regularity in attendance.

In district No. 19, a portion of the consolidated district first mentioned, the pupils are not hauled by the district. The longest distance traveled is four and three-fourths miles. The board has built a pretty fair barn on the school grounds, provided ample room for horses, and those who live in distant parts of the district drive their own rigs, put their horses up in the barn, and return home in the evening.

From everything that I have been able to observe in my own county I heartily indorse the plan of consolidation. I expect to hold this winter as many township meetings throughout the county as I can. At these times, I shall do my best to talk consolidation.

Supt. James A. Ray, Marion county, then took up the subtopic, "How Consolidation is Viewed in Marion County, and What it Has Done for the Districts Concerned," as follows :

Our consolidated school is located at Burns, a small but enterprising little town in the southeastern part of the county. It is a consolidation of five districts, three of Marion county and two of Butler county. The school has now been in operation for three years. Two years ago a \$9,000 school-house was erected and equipped with the most modern apparatus. A four-year high-school course has been added, and six teachers are employed, including a special teacher of music.

The enrolment last year reached 206 pupils. Thirty-six of this number were enrolled in the high school, and I am informed that the enrolment in the high school this year will reach at least fifty, and that a large majority of this number are boys and girls who live on the farm. This, it seems to me, demonstrates that the people of our rural communities will give their boys and girls a high-school education if the high school is brought to them.

Five wagons are used to transport the pupils to and from school. These wagons are constructed especially for this purpose and are as comfortable and convenient as can be made. In severe winter weather they are tightly covered, the beds and sides are heavily padded, and arrangements are made for putting in an oil-stove. In short, everything is done that can be done to keep the children from suffering from the effects of cold weather. Each wagon is constructed to hold about twenty children. Most of the wagons are driven by high-school boys, and the routes are so planned that no wagon has to be driven more than six and one-half miles. The cost varies according to the distance driven. It is all the way from twenty dollars to thirty dollars, the last-named amount being the highest price paid for any wagon. The driver is made responsible for the conduct of the pupils in the wagon, and if there should be misconduct of any kind on the way to and from school, the driver reports it to the teacher of said children. As far as I have been able to ascertain, there has not as yet been the slightest objection raised to the mode of transportation, by a single patron. Every one seems to be perfectly satisfied with it. I am told that so far but one wagon has been tardy, and that was because of the lameness of one of the horses.

Statistics not only show that the average daily attendance is at least twenty per cent. better than it was under the old system, but also show that tardiness has been diminished at least forty per cent.

The cost so far is a little more under this system than it was under the

old system. Under the old system, the average levy for the year 1903 was fourteen mills. Under this it has required a levy each year of twenty-four mills. However, to the best of my knowledge, there has been no objection made by any one to the extra cost. I have been over a greater part of the district, and I failed to find a person who wanted to go back to the old system.

As to what consolidation has done for the districts concerned, may be summed up as follows: It has given them a good graded school with close supervision; it has given them a large, modern, commodious school building, well equipped with good apparatus, well ventilated, and steam heated; it has given them a good high-school course at home, and without additional cost; it has given them the advantage of a special teacher of music. A manual-training room has been provided for; also a gymnasium. It has increased the average daily attendance twenty per cent.; it has diminished tardiness forty per cent.; it has given them more efficient teachers and a longer term of school; it is an advantage to the health of the children. And I am told on good authority that the price of land has materially increased since the organization of the school.

The consolidated district has a valuation of \$219,651.

The success of this school is working a revolution for consolidation in other communities of the county. School boards from other districts have visited the Burns school, and those of them who were against consolidation before were converted to it. We expect to organize, before the year is over, at least three consolidated schools.

Supt. W. E. Hagy, Ellsworth county, then discussed the subject, "What the High Schools of our Consolidated Schools have Accomplished in Ellsworth County," as follows:

We have in Ellsworth county a consolidated school that has many elements of strength, especially from a financial point of view. The district includes an area of $25\frac{1}{2}$ sections of land, including a small village, and has an assessed valuation of \$63,000. We have never levied more than fifteen mills for the maintenance of the school. The attendance at this school runs from 100 to 120. It is certainly much better than under the old system.

Another great advantage is that of better supervision; and last, but not least, is the better school spirit that prevails in the district, and in this respect it is very different from the single system.

In this district there are always from ten to fifteen who finish the common-school course, and this is quite a per cent. in excess of the number that will finish under the single-district system. The reason for this is probably the inducement that offers to enter the high school in the same building. In the high school there are from twenty to twenty-five pupils. Every year we have from two to four graduates. This school maintains a three-years course. It provides for three years of German, this being in a German community; has three years of English, with algebra, geometry, and a number of the sciences.

A large number of those who have graduated from this high school have entered some higher school of learning. This is a matter of great pride to the community. I am certain that if the single-district plan had prevailed but few of those would have taken courses in higher institutions of learn-

ing. The people of this district pride themselves very much upon their schools.

In answer to a question, Superintendent Hagy stated that before consolidation they had an average of six and two-thirds months. Now an eight-months term prevails.

In reply to a question as to whether the wagons go by every house, Superintendent Ray said: "As far as our county is concerned the wagons go to every house. Those families that transport their own children live off the road and the patrons are paid for the transportation."

Superintendent Hagy further said: "Last winter the people adopted a different method of transportation of pupils. They simply paid the parents fifteen cents per day for the transportation of their own children. They told me it is cheaper to haul their own children than to hire a wagon. A large per cent. of the children live within the two-mile limit of the school."

At this point State Superintendent Fairchild stated that it is his intention to get out a pamphlet on the subject of consolidation, containing all the information that Kansas can furnish, and that it will be sent out at the earliest possible moment.

Superintendent Codding suggested that the telephone is solving the question of transportation, the driver being able to telephone ahead from different points along the route.

Mr. MacDonald said that the greatest obstacle in the path of consolidation in Shawnee county is selfishness. Several districts would like to unite, but each wants the schoolhouse.

Superintendent Nixon, Greenwood county, suggested that consolidation is not always practicable in thinly settled districts. Mr. Fairchild replied to this by saying:

Let us be practical; let us not attempt to bring about consolidation where it may not be wisely and reasonably done.

As I said before, let us be practical. There are, however, attempts in operation now, for instance, in Rooks county. There was a very careful and elaborate effort made by which all the schools of a township were to be brought under one system. The final issue was unfavorable, owing to the disposition of one district; but the scheme is on again; they are trying it out, and sooner or later they are bound to succeed. We have districts that are very much larger than some of these of which I have been speaking, but I still think perhaps that does not serve as an objection in any way.

Superintendent Nutter, of Republic county, further said:

I believe we should discuss the problem Mr. MacDonald raised—the location of the schoolhouse. While we cannot overcome that objection entirely, yet I would not let that be the first issue. I would have them vote on the question of consolidation, after that has been discussed thoroughly, and let

them settle at a later meeting the question of the location of the schoolhouse. I do not attach much importance to the objection raised by our friend here. My experience is that the location is not a serious point; that the good sense of the district will arrange that, and take care that it is centrally located. That the great problem is not, perhaps, so much the location of the schoolhouse as to divert the attention of the public from the high school, college and university back to the common school itself. If we can get the people of the state to take up and study the real situation and the condition of the common school, I am satisfied that we will be able to get the people to take hold of this problem as never before.

Ex-State Superintendent Winans said:

Mr. Superintendent, Ladies and Gentlemen: I am very much pleased at the plainly apparent sentiment in favor of the consolidation of the country schools of the state that is manifest here this morning. I believe that among the important subjects that you superintendents are discussing at this moment, the one of the greatest importance to the children of this state is consolidation, though we must admit that in certain localities it is not altogether practicable at this time. We must also admit that selfishness will be a deterring influence in many counties. We have had the district-school system in this state for more than forty-five years (since 1861), and the sentiment that prevails among the people on account of the influence of the little red schoolhouse has led the people to believe that we have just about the finest system of public schools to be found anywhere. This is not true. We never will have until the public schools of the state are consolidated. We must lead the people of the state to see that their schools may be better, ought to be better, and can be better; and perhaps I ought to say that while these consolidated schools may cost a little more, they will cost not so much when the aggregate daily attendance, principalship supervision, promotions and work done—when all these very essential things are taken into consideration. If they can be led to see that they can get better schools, that they need better schools, and that the only way to get them is by paying for them; can be led to see that they would better devote a part of their wealth to educating their children, they will be in favor of better schools.

It was my good fortune a year ago to work for a month with 500 or 600 of the teachers of the state of Louisiana. Some 300 of their district superintendents and representatives of the school boards were in session, and the subject of consolidation was thoroughly discussed; indeed, it has taken a strong hold on the people of Louisiana. We have as good schoolhouses in the state of Kansas, as well located, good roads, and all that, as can be found in the Union—much better than they have in Louisiana; but the trouble with us is just this: that the schools have been going on over forty years on the district plan, and the people think they are good, about as good as schools can be, and that the little red schoolhouse (by the way not a red one can be found, for they are all painted white,) is *par excellence*. I am glad to believe that it is not necessary before this convention this morning to say anything in favor of consolidation. The thoughtless selfishness of people, as mentioned by Mr. MacDonald, in that each wants the schoolhouse next his own door, and the idea that schools are good enough, are some of the obstacles in the way of consolidation.

President Nichols, of Manhattan, offered the suggestion that the farmers be quietly urged to plant out orchards near their own doors, then they would not be so insistent upon having the schoolhouse next door.

President Hill, of Emporia, said, in part :

I hesitate to speak on this subject because of the fact that I do not feel, in the light of this discussion, that there is anything I have to say of a practical and helpful nature. What I have to say in regard to the matter is altogether from a theoretical point of view. But I do welcome the opportunity to express my deep interest in this movement and my thorough confidence in its ultimate success and the belief that what has been developed here is in fact already accomplished—will be like seed that will multiply thirty, sixty and a hundred fold. The superintendent who becomes thoroughly enthused with the idea that this is a possibility, and then selects the point of least resistance and concentrates his forces upon that point, is able to present such an object-lesson as shall convince the people that consolidation is the solution of the problem before us. I believe today that the great educational problem of the present is with the rural school. I believe the time will come when parents will feel that their children are handicapped by the environments of the city and will seek to place their children in consolidated country schools where they will have the advantages of country life and receive an education equal to that given the city boy and girl.

President Nichols, of Manhattan, said :

I think you know my views on consolidation, and know that I am radically in favor of it. I know that so far as the Kansas Agricultural College is concerned we shall welcome the time when we can build a course based upon high-school preparation, when every boy and girl in Kansas can get a high-school education at his own door.

As a matter of fact we all know there would be no progress if conservatism were to rule and the old régime or order of things should prevail forever. The advantages, it seems to me, are all with consolidation. We will never get really free education in the high schools, education for every boy and girl in Kansas, until we do get consolidation. I hope that the work started here will appear in print.

Mr. Fairchild then introduced Mr. Johnson, superintendent of Jackson county, Missouri. Mr. Johnson said :

I merely want to ask this question in regard to consolidation : We have three consolidated schools in Jackson county. One of the greatest difficulties is the matter of expense. A meeting will be called, at which I will perhaps speak, explaining ever so carefully the whole matter of consolidation; then the day of the school meeting some one who has a selfish interest in the matter will get up and assure others who are not very sure of their own figures that consolidation will triple their taxes. And one man advocating that theory will injure the cause in one day more than the superintendent can overcome in a month.

Answered by Mr. Fairchild, that we find the same trouble in this state.

Mr. Miller, of the Agricultural College, announced that he had reserved the first forty-five minutes on the program for each farmers' institute, which he will hold in many counties this fall, for the use of the county superintendent to present the subject of consolidation to the farmers.

BUSINESS MEETING.

The committee on examination was called, and Mr. Carter stated that the committee was ready to report. The report was as follows:

We, your committee on "Questions," do respectfully submit the following recommendations:

That the questions be so skilfully arranged that they constitute a test of the subject-matter as given by the Course of Study.

That the test in spelling be taken from the two months' previous work in the adopted test.

That the questions absolutely follow the Course of Study, and be general rather than particular.

That a committee of nine county superintendents, each of whom shall arrange the questions for one branch, be appointed by the state superintendent.

That the state superintendent, on account of his broad knowledge of common-school work, reserve the privilege of revising any or all of the questions as he sees fit.

That county superintendents and teachers be requested to take the same precautionary measures to secure honest results from these examinations as in common-school and teachers' examinations.

That a uniform fee of twenty five cents be charged each applicant in each county in the state.

JNO. R. CARTER,
W. H. MCDANIEL,
MARY H. KIRBY,
Committee.

The report was adopted as read. The above committee on questions also included a committee, composed of Superintendents Codding and Kelsey, on county graduation and examination. A motion was made and seconded that the committee on county graduation and examinations be granted further time and leave to report at the holiday meeting. Motion prevailed, with the understanding that that portion included in the report of the committee on questions will stand.

The chairman then called for the report of the committee on resolutions, Mr. Vinsonhaler, chairman. The resolutions were read, and are as follows:

The committee on resolutions beg leave to make the following report:

1 It is the judgment of this committee that great educational benefit will be derived from this meeting and a better understanding of the Course of Study and of the duties of county superintendents will result; and we commend the wisdom of the state superintendent in calling together the county

superintendents of the state and thereby solidifying and unifying them, making their interests and aims one.

2. We recommend that the basis of promotion from the eighth grade be the same in the city and rural school, and said promotion be based upon grades made on questions furnished by the state superintendent.

3. We recommend that some plan be adopted whereby we may secure uniformity in the common-school examinations, considering the following points: Time, standard for passing, examining board, fees.

4. *And it is resolved*, That in the opinion of the committee no stronger educational force can be secured than through the permanent organization of the county superintendents, and we recommend that such organization be effected at this time; that the state superintendent shall be *ex officio* chairman; that we elect a vice-chairman, secretary, and treasurer; that a committee be appointed to draft all necessary rules and regulations.

C. I. VINSONHALER, *Chairman*,

MISS JENNIE DAVY,

F. I. HINSHAW,

Committee.

On motion of Mr. Hamilton, properly seconded, the resolutions were adopted as read. Motion carried unanimously.

On motion the following officers were elected: Assistant State Superintendent C. C. Starr was elected vice-president; Mrs. Maude E. Funston, of Iola, secretary, and Supt. James A. Ray, of Marion, treasurer.

Superintendent Fairchild then announced the following committee of nine to prepare examination questions for the following year, it being understood that this committee is to prepare lists of test questions based upon the Course of Study for our common schools. These lists of questions are to serve as a test of the work gone over once every two months: Supt. Geo. T. Coddington, Westmoreland; Supt. C. W. Good, Hiawatha; Supt. A. W. Hamilton, Hutchinson; Supt. John R. Carter, Topeka; Supt. W. H. McDaniel, El Dorado; Supt. Mrs. Mary H. Kirby, Lyndon; Supt. A. J. Stanley, Lincoln; Supt. C. O. Bowman, Lawrence; Supt. Miss Margaret R. McFarland, Olathe.

Superintendent Fairchild then made a few closing remarks, in which, among other things, he said:

I have been endeavoring to make an estimate of the number of children represented here this morning, and I think this number would reach 300,000. They are represented by you who have their interests and their welfare at heart. We can only perform the best service through an awakening of public sentiment and the directing of public attention toward and for the country school. Everything that this department can do to further the interests of the country school will be done.

Meeting adjourned.



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